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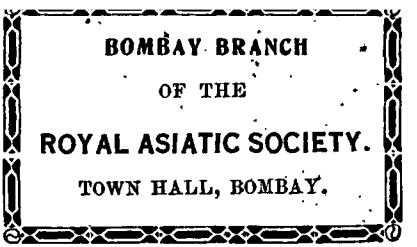

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LIFE

OF

FRANCIS JEFFREY

BY

LORD COCKBURN

ONE OF THE JUDGES OF THE COURT OF SESSION IN SCOTLAND

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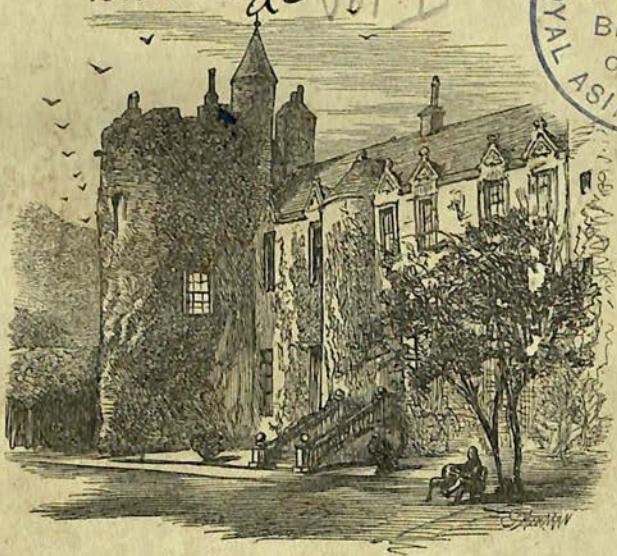

CRAIGCROOK, JEFFREY'S RESIDENCE, NEAR EDINBURGH

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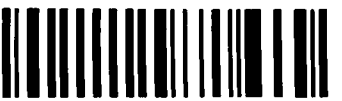
EDINBURGH

ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK

1874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ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS edition of Lord Cockburn's two interesting works lays no claim to novelty, being simply a reprint in a smaller form, with the correction of a few literal errors. It has not been thought advisable to reproduce the whole volume of correspondence which accompanies the original edition of the Life of Jeffrey, but to confine it to a selection of the more characteristic letters, and those having reference to subjects of general interest.

Through the kindness of Mr. John Steell, R.S.A., this volume is illustrated by a drawing of that eminent sculptor's statue of Jeffrey, which now graces the Parliament House in Edinburgh. In this figure (of which the reduced engraving can give but a faint idea) the artist has been very successful in representing both the features and the nervous manner of his subject.

Both works have for a considerable time been out of print, and the frequent inquiries that have been made for them induce the publishers to issue the present edition.

EDINBURGH, *October* 1872.

POSTSCRIPT TO SECOND EDITION.

As the absence of letters to several persons of distinction with whom he was known to be intimate may excite surprise, it is proper to explain that some of these friends, such as Stewart, Playfair, and Brown, living in Edinburgh at the same time with himself, were almost never written to; that others, such as Sydney Smith, were in the habit of purposely destroying letters addressed to them; that any letters that were written to others, such as Romilly and Mackintosh, have been lost; and that some by whom letters are still possessed, have, for different reasons, but chiefly from delicacy, declined to allow them to be published at present. H. C.

Bonaly, *April* 1852.

PREFACE.

My only apology for the presumption of engaging in this work, is, that it was undertaken at the request of the family, and of several of the friends, of Lord Jeffrey. Besides other objections, there is an age, after which it is seldom safe for one who has never tried to write a book, to begin the attempt.

There are both advantages and disadvantages in the nearness of a man's biography to his actual life. One of the disadvantages consists in the difficulty of speaking plainly of persons still living, or recently dead. "*His greatest fault* (says Lord Jeffrey of Hardy's Life of Charlemont) *is, that he does not abuse anybody*, even where the dignity of history and of virtue calls loudly for such an infliction." And, no doubt, this is a serious objection. But if the biographer of Charlemont felt the indelicacy of the censorian duty in a work published eleven years after the death of his subject, how would he have recoiled from it within less than two? But, indeed, there were few persons whom Jeffrey himself abused; and though there were some public matters connected

with his life on which it would not be wrong to speak, even now, in terms of severe condemnation, it would be unworthy of his magnanimous spirit to recall provocations which he had forgotten.

My thanks are due, and are hereby given, to all those who have assisted me by contributions of letters.

These letters will probably be deemed the only valuable part of this work. It must, therefore, be explained, that he was so constant a correspondent, that those now published are but a small portion of what he was always writing; and that his letters were generally so full of those personal and domestic details, which, however delightful to receive, are uninteresting, and can scarcely be made even intelligible, to strangers, that they very seldom admit of being communicated entire. Nothing is omitted from this publication for any other reason. What have been selected are not given on account of any particular opinions or occurrences which they may record, but *solely from their tendency to disclose the personal nature of the man.* And I am bound to state, that, out of many hundreds of his letters that I have seen, there are scarcely three lines that might not be read with propriety to any sensitive lady, or to any fastidious clergyman.

H. C.

BONALY, *March* 1852.

LIFE OF LORD JEFFREY.

BOYHOOD.

FRANCIS JEFFREY, the greatest of British critics, was born in Edinburgh on the 23d of October 1773. There are very few persons the precise spot of whose nativity it is worth while taking much pains to fix. But as almost all the accounts of Jeffrey do specify a place, and a wrong one, it may be as well to mention that he certainly was *not* born in either of the three houses, in Fisher's Land, or Patterson's Court, or Buchanan's Court, all in Lawnmarket Street, where the family afterwards lived; but in one of the flats or floors of what is now marked No. 7, on the west side of Charles Street, George Square. Besides other unquestionable evidence, he himself pointed this out as his birthplace to his friend, Mr. Adam Black, bookseller.

His father was George Jeffrey, who was bred to the law, and became one of the Depute-Clerks in the Supreme Court (called the Court of Session); not a high, but a very respectable, situation. His mother was Henrietta Loudoun, a daughter of Mr. John Loudoun, who had been educated for the Church, but abandoned it for farming, which he

practised near Lanark. Their children were Margaret, who died in childhood; Mary, afterwards married to George Napier, Esq., a writer to the signet, Edinburgh; Francis; John, a merchant; and Marion, afterwards the wife of Dr. Thomas Brown, physician in Glasgow, now of Lanfine, in the county of Ayr. Francis survived the whole family.* The father, who died in 1812, aged 70, was a sensible and very respectable man; but of rather a gloomy disposition. Mrs. Jeffrey had all the maternal virtues, and was greatly beloved by her family; the more so from the contrast between her and her husband. She died suddenly in September 1786. Francis, then thirteen, happened to be passing a few days at Stevenston, in East Lothian, about 17 miles from Edinburgh. Intelligence of his mother's danger reached the family he was living with; but as it was too late to get the boy into Edinburgh that night, they meant to conceal it from him till next day. But he had detected, or suspected it, and set off next morning before the house was astir, and walked home alone. The loss of their mother drew the children closer to each other, and the warmest

* A story that is told of a fire having broken out, when he was about a year old, in his father's house, and of his being nearly sacrificed by having been forgotten in his garret crib till rescued by a poor slater, whom he lived to save in return long afterwards by gratuitous professional services, is, unfortunately, groundless. It has probably arisen from some confusion with a fire which consumed his father's house in 1792, when he was at Oxford, and when it was with difficulty that his grandmother was rescued by her granddaughter, Mary Crockett, afterwards Mrs. Murray.

affection subsisted between them throughout their whole lives.

Francis learned his mere letters at home; and John Cockburn, who had a school in the abyss of Bailie Fyfe's Close, taught him to put them together. He was the tiniest possible child, but dark and vigorous, and gained some reputation there while still in petticoats. One Sealy had the honour of giving him his whole dancing education, which was over before his ninth year began. It is to be hoped, for Mr. Sealy's sake, that this pupil was not the best specimen of his skill; for certainly neither dancing, nor any muscular accomplishment, except walking, at which he was always excellent, was within his triumphs.

The more serious part of his education commenced in October 1781; when, at the age of eight, he was sent to the High School of Edinburgh, where he continued for the next six years. This day school had long been the most celebrated establishment of the kind in this country. Its mere antiquity gave it importance, and its position, as the metropolitan school, enabled it to look down upon the few rival institutions that then existed. Its triumph was completed by its not having been then discovered that interchanging Scotch and English boys did good to both, and by the total absence of the idea, which has since taken possession of so many weak heads, that whenever a boy is supposed to be not signalising himself in Scotland, sending him to England, instead of stupifying him, must set him up. So that, in addition to its age, its fame, and its merits,

it had the still greater advantage of a monopoly, and this in the place where the aristocracy of Scotland chiefly resided. It had then what would now be deemed intolerable defects; but defects of the age, and not of the place, and which do not now exist. And it was cursed by two under masters, whose atrocities young men cannot be made to believe, but old men cannot forget, and the criminal law would not now endure. It was presided over, however, by Dr. Alexander Adam, the author of "Roman Antiquities," whose personal and professional virtues were sufficient to sustain, and to redeem, any school; and in his two other under masters, Mr. Luke Fraser and Mr. French, he had associates worthy of their chief.*

His first master was Mr. Fraser; who from three successive classes, of four years each, had the singular good fortune to turn out Walter Scott, Francis Jeffrey, and Henry Brougham. He is justly described by Scott as "a good Latin scholar and a very worthy man." There were about 120 boys in Jeffrey's class, all under one master, unaided by any usher. When Jeffrey was in his seventeenth year, he wrote "A Sketch," etc., full of personal recollections and views. In this paper he gives the following account of his first day's sensations at this school.

* The school still survives, and flourishes. Dr. Adam was succeeded in 1810 by Professor Pillans, who introduced the modern spirit of teaching, and as many of the modern improvements as was wise for the place, and was probably the best head master of a Scotch classical school that had then appeared. He, when advanced in 1820 to a chair in the College, was succeeded by the late excellent Dr. Carson.

"My next step was to the Grammar school; and here my apprehensions and terrors were revived and magnified; for my companions, either through a desire of terrifying me, or because they had found it so, exaggerated to me the difficulty of our tasks, and dwelled upon the unrelenting severity of the master. Prepossessed with these representations, I trembled at what I was destined to suffer, and entered the school as if it had been a place of torture. Never, I think, was surprise equal to mine, the first day of my attendance. I sat in silent terror—all was buzz and tumult around—a foot is heard on the stairs—everything is hushed as death, and every dimply smile prolongated into an expression of the most serious respect. The handle of the door sounds—ah! here he comes!—I thought my heart would have burst my breast. There began my disappointment. I had expected to have seen a little withered figure, with a huge rod in his hand, his eyes sparkling with rage, and his whole attitude resembling the pictures and descriptions of the furies. Absurd as the idea was, I don't know how it had laid hold of my imagination, and I was surprised to see it reversed, and reversed it certainly was. For Mr. Fraser was a plump, jolly, heavy-looking man, rather foolish-like as otherwise, and in my opinion would have made a better landlord than a pedagogue. He seats himself, looks smilingly around, asks some simple questions, and seems well pleased with answers which I knew I could have made. I was struck; I could hardly believe my own senses; and every moment I looked for the appearance of that

rod which had so terrified my apprehensions. The rod, however, made not its appearance. I grew quiet, but still fixed in a stupor of wonder. I gazed at the object before me, and listened with the most awful attention to all the trifling words that dropped from his lips. At last he dismissed us, and I returned home full of satisfaction, and told eagerly to every one around me my expectations and disappointment."

He continued with Mr. Fraser four years, learning only Latin. Greek and Mathematics were proscribed. His few surviving class-fellows only recollect him as a little, clever, anxious boy, always near the top of the class, and who never lost a place without shedding tears. He says, in the Sketch, that he was "not without rivals, and one of them at least got the better, being decidedly superior in several points." I have not been able to discover even the name of his solitary victor.

In October 1785, he passed on to the rector's class, where he remained two years. He was here in the midst of one hundred and forty boys, one-half of whom was a year in advance of the other half, but all in one room, and at the same time, and all under a single master. But this master was Adam, who added some Greek to the Latin, and delighted in the detection and encouragement of every appearance of youthful talent or goodness. — "It was from this respectable man (says Scott) that I first learned the value of the knowledge I had hitherto considered only as a burdensome task." Jeffrey, through life, recollected him with the same judicious gratitude.

Of this class he says, "During my first year (with Fraser) I acknowledged only one superior; in the last there were not less than ten who ranked above me." Whether they were of the ten or not, the only two of his schoolfellows whom I have been able to trace into any distinction, are the Rev. Dr. Brunton, Professor of Oriental Literature, and Dr. Alexander Monro, the third of his illustrious line, Professor of Anatomy, both in the College of Edinburgh.

Voluntary reading was not much in fashion then with the High School boys; but Jeffrey had not neglected it utterly, or been frivolous in his selection; for besides some travels and natural history, the library register shows that he was rather steady in the perusal of Hume's History, and of Middleton's Life of Cicero.

Thus six years passed away; and without being marked by any of those early achievements or indications which biography seems to think so necessary for its interest, and is therefore so apt to detect, or to invent, in the dawnings of those who have risen to future eminence. He escaped being made a wonder of. Forty years after leaving the school he testified his recollection of it by contributing £50 towards its removal to its present beautiful building* and noble site.

One day, in the winter of 1786-7, he was standing on the High Street, staring at a man whose appearance struck him; a person standing at a shop door tapped him on the shoulder, and said, "Ay, laddie! ye may weel look at that man! That's Robert Burns." He never saw Burns again.

* By Mr. Thomas Hamilton, architect.

In the beginning of the winter of 1787, he was sent to Glasgow College, in his fourteenth year. This is often a dangerous liberation; but it was very salutary for one whose ambition was already awakened, and whose taste was beginning to feel the literary attractions which proved the delight of his life. Exemption from the task-work of school, and getting into a region of new scenes, and with higher pursuits, and more independence, was the very change which his progress required. I believe that Glasgow was preferred, with a view to the Oxford exhibitions, to which it has long owed so many of its best students, and of which it has in general made so fair a use. None of our other colleges have such academic prizes. If there be any rich Scotchman who is now thinking of perpetuating his name by public munificence, let him not waste himself on hospitals, or such common objects, but let him think of the depressing poverty of his native colleges, and of the honour which a long roll of distinguished men, receiving the higher part of their education through his bounty, has, for a century and a half, conferred on the founder of the Glasgow exhibitions. But if Jeffrey's father had any such view, it was soon abandoned.

He remained at Glasgow for two sessions—that is, from October 1787 to May 1788, and from October 1788 to May 1789—and was at home during the intervening summers. In his first session his classes were the Greek, taught by Professor John Young, and the Logic, by Professor George Jardine. Neither masters nor pupil could have been better suited for each other. They gave him good teaching, and he

took them a spirit most anxious to be taught. Jardine, in particular, though recently appointed, and conspicuous neither for ability nor for learning, had already evinced that singular power of making youths work, which, for the forty subsequent years, made his class the intellectual grindstone of the college. Jeffrey seems to have fancied at first that Jardine did not take sufficient notice of him; but he soon formed a steady friendship with both him and Young, and never forgot what he owed them. There was an article in the Edinburgh Review in 1821 (No. 70, Art. 3) on classical education, shortly after Mr. Young's death. It was not written by Jeffrey, but he added a discriminating note explaining Young's merits; and in addressing the college on his first inauguration as rector, he mentioned him and Jardine in grateful and affectionate terms. Of Jardine he says, "I cannot resist congratulating myself, and all this assembly, that I still see beside me one surviving instructor of my early youth,—the most revered, the most justly valued, of all my instructors,—the individual of whom I must be allowed to say *here*, what I have never omitted to say in every other place, that it is to him, and his most judicious instructions, that I owe my taste for letters, and any little literary distinction I may since have been enabled to attain. It is no small part of the gratification of this day to find him here, proceeding, with unabated vigour and ardour, in the eminently useful career to which his life has been dedicated; and I hope and trust that he will yet communicate to many generations of

pupils those inestimable benefits to which many may easily do greater honour, but for which no one can be more grateful than the humble individual who now addresses you."

The only class that I can ascertain his having attended during his second session, was the Moral Philosophy, under Professor Arthur; who, being the assistant and successor of Reid, must be supposed to have been a person of some merit.

Professor John Millar, whose subject was Law and Government, was then in his zenith. His lectures were admirable; and so was his conversation; and his evening parties; and his boxing (gloved) with his favourite pupils. No young man admitted to his house ever forgot him; and the ablest used to say that the discussions into which he led them, domestically and convivially, were the most exciting and the most instructive exercises in which they ever took a part. Jeffrey says that his books, excellent though they be, "reveal nothing of that magical vivacity which made his conversation and his lectures still more full of delight than of instruction; of that frankness and fearlessness which led him to engage, without preparation, in every fair contention, and neither to dread nor disdain the powers of any opponent and still less, perhaps, of that remarkable and unique talent, by which he was enabled to clothe, in concise and familiar expressions, the most profound and original views of the most complicated questions and thus to render the knowledge which he communicated so manageable and unostentatious, as to turn out his pupils from the sequestered retreats

of a college, in a condition immediately to apply their acquisitions to the business and affairs of the world." (Rectorial Address.)

It has been supposed that this description could only have been drawn by one who had attended the course; but this is a mistake. It was the result of subsequent acquaintance, and of common fame; for he was never one of Millar's pupils. This is confirmed by the class lists, which have been preserved, and do not contain Jeffrey's name; and by two of Mr. Millar's daughters, recently, if not still, alive, who remembered their father and Jeffrey's introduction to each other, which took place in the theatre, some years after the latter had left Glasgow. The truth is, that Millar's free doctrines, and his Whig party, were held in abhorrence by Mr. Jeffrey senior; who, after it appeared that the political opinions of Francis were on the popular side, and incorrigible, used to blame himself for having allowed the mere vicinity of Millar's influence to corrupt and ruin his son.

The Rev. Dr. Macfarlan, now Principal of the College of Glasgow, and the Rev. Dr. Haldane, now Principal of the College of St. Mary's, St. Andrews, were fellow-students with Jeffrey at Glasgow, and have given me some information about his state and proceedings there.* Principal Macfarlan says, that, during his first session, "he exhibited nothing remarkable except a degree of quickness, bordering, as some thought, on petulance; and the whim of cherishing a premature moustache, very black, and

* Both of these Principals are now dead, the former died in 1858, and the latter 1854.

covering the whole of his upper lip, for which he was much laughed at and teased by his fellow-students." But there was no want of spirit; for Adam Smith had been set up that year for the office of Lord Rector, which depends on the votes of the professors and students, and Principal Haldane recollects seeing a little black creature, whom he had not observed before, haranguing some boys in the Green against voting for Dr. Smith. This was Jeffrey. Not that he had any objection either to the Wealth of Nations or to its author; but the Economist was patronised by the Professors, which has often made the students take the opposite side. The opposition, however, was withdrawn, and, on the 12th of December 1787, Smith was installed. It is very unlikely that Jeffrey would miss seeing such a ceremony, in honour of such a man; but an expression in his own Inaugural Address, where he says that Smith "is *reported* to have remained silent," seems to throw a doubt on his presence.

In his second session he disclosed himself more satisfactorily. Principal Macfarlan says, "He broke upon us very brilliantly. In a debating society called, I think, the Historical and Critical, he distinguished himself as one of the most acute and fluent speakers; his favourite subjects being criticism and metaphysics." Professor Jardine used to require his pupils to write an exercise, and then to make them give in written remarks on each other's work. Principal Haldane's essay fell to be examined by Jeffrey, who, on this occasion probably made his first critical adventure. "My exercise (says the

Principal) fell into the hands of Jeffrey, and sorely do I repent that I did not preserve the essay, with his remarks upon it. For though they were unmercifully severe, they gave early promise of that critical acumen which was afterwards fully developed in the pages of the Edinburgh Review. In returning my essay to me, the good professor, willing to save my feelings, read some of the remarks at the beginning of the criticism, but the remainder he read in a suppressed tone of voice, muttering something as if he thought it too severe." The first prize in the Logic class was awarded, by the votes of the pupils, to a person called Godfrey; but he was much older than Jeffrey, who, Principal Haldane says, had, all throughout, made "a brilliant figure," and was, "unquestionably, the ablest student of the class."

Some of the pupils formed themselves into the Elocution Society, which met every Monday evening, for their improvement in recitation. From recitation to acting is but a short step; and, accordingly, they meant to have performed Tancred and Sigismunda, when Principal Macfarlan was to have shone as Rodolpho, and Jeffrey as Sigismunda. But as an apartment within the college was to have been the theatre, the academical authorities stopped the scheme, to the rage of the disappointed actors. On the last page of his notes of Professor Arthur's lectures, Jeffrey sets forth that, before finally leaving the college, he had one thing to "advise, to declare, to reprobate, to ask, and to wish,"—"What I have to advise is, Mr. Arthur and the Principal to pay a little more attention to the Graces in their respective

modes of lecturing and praying."—"What I declare is, that the Faculty has acted in the meanest, most illiberal, and despicable manner with regard to the Elocution Club," etc. etc.

He began here the practice, to which he steadily adhered, of taking full notes of all the lectures he heard;—not mere transcripts of what the lecturer said, but expositions by the pupil, in his own language, of what he had meant, with discussions of the doctrines. Hence, even the division of separate prelections is seldom regularly observed; but the whole course is run together, in a way which, while it does not swamp the professor, afforded an excellent exercise for the student, both in thinking and composing.

The turn that his mind was taking is evinced by the following letter to his old master, Dr. Adam, which, for a boy of sixteen, seems to be curious:—"Dear Sir, I do not question that you will be surprised at the freedom of this uninvited intrusion; and when I tell you (by way of apology) that for these some weeks I have been impelled to the deed by the impulse of some internal agent, I question if your surprise will be diminished. As a student of philosophy I thought myself bound to withstand the temptation, and as an adept in logic, to analyse the source of its effects. Both attempts have been equally unsuccessful. I have neither been able to resist the inclination, nor to discover its source. My great affection for the study of mind led me a weary way before I abandoned this attempt; nor did I leave the track of inquiry till I thought I had discovered that it proceeded from some emotion in the powers

of the will rather than of the intellect. My epistolary communications have hitherto been confined to those whom I could treat with all the familiarity of the most perfect equality, and whose experience or attainments I was not accustomed to consider as superior to my own. This, I think, will account and apologise for any peculiarity you may discern in my style. I think it superfluous to assure you, that whatever appearance of levity or petulance *that* may bear, the slightest, the most distant, shadow of disrespect was never intended. When I recollect the mass of instruction I have received from your care —when I consider the excellent principles it was calculated to convey—when I contemplate the perspicuous, attentive, and dispassionate mode of conveyance—and when I experience the advantages and benefits of all these, I cannot refrain the gratification of a finer feeling in the acknowledgment of my obligations. I am sufficiently sensible that these are hackneyed and cant phrases; but, as they express the sentiments of my soul, I think they must be tolerated. If you ever find leisure to notice this, I shall esteem your answer as a particular honour; and that you may more easily accomplish that, I inform you that I lodge at Mr. Milne's, Montrose Lodgings. So—this is an introductory letter! It wants indeed the formality of such a performance; but the absence of that requisite may for once be supplied by the *sincerity* with which I assure you I am, dear sir, yours, etc. etc., F. JEFFREY.—Glasgow, January 1789."

To this communication the worthy rector sent the

following answer:—"Edinburgh, January 1789—I received your favour with great pleasure, and the more so as you say it has proceeded from an emotion in the powers of the will rather than the intellect. I perceive, however, it has been the joint effect of both, and I am happy to observe the latter so well cultivated. For your sentiments and expressions are such as indicate no small proficiency in the studies in which you have been engaged. I should have shown you how much I valued your epistolary communications by acknowledging them in course; but I delayed it till I should have a little more leisure. It is long since I have relinquished the field of metaphysical speculation, otherwise I should answer you in kind. I was very fond of these studies at your time of life; but I have exchanged them, if not for more entertaining, at least for more practical, pursuits; as I hope you will soon do, with all the success which your industry and talents merit. You need not be afraid to take up hackneyed phrases; for it is the property of genius to convert everything to its own use, and to give the most common things a new appearance. I thank you for your very polite compliments. You have handsomely expressed what I have at least attempted, for I have not yet effected what I wished. There is much room for improvement in the plan of education in this country; but there are so many obstacles to it, that I begin to despair of seeing it accomplished. One thing gives me the greatest satisfaction—that in our Universities, and particularly in yours—young men have the best opportunities of acquiring extensive

knowledge, and the most liberal principles. I hope you will never forget to join classical elegance with philosophical accuracy and investigation. Even the mechanical part of writing is not below your attention. You see the freedom which you are always to expect from me, and I know you will take it in good part."

It would have been comfortable to Jeffrey's many correspondents if he had taken the rector's hint about the mechanical part of writing. His incapacity of manuscript seems to have been a very early subject of domestic censure. He tells his sister Mary about this time, "I am sure I would willingly forfeit any of my attainments to acquire a good form of writing. For I am convinced much more time and trouble have I bestowed upon this, without effect, than would have been sufficient for the acquisition of a much more complex object. The truth is, I detest the employment. Such a mechanical drudgery! and without any certainty of the attainment of my end." Of course, the detestation prevailed, and a more illegible hand has very rarely tormented friends. The plague of small and misshapen letters is aggravated by a love of contractions, and an aversion to the relief of new paragraphs. There are whole volumes, and even an entire play, with the full complement of acts and scenes, without a new line. Here, however, as in everything else, he improved as he advanced.

To those who only knew him in his maturity, there was nothing more prominent in the character of his intellect than its quickness. He seemed to

invent arguments, and to pour out views, and to arrive at conclusions, instinctively. Preparation was a thing with which it was thought that so elastic a spirit did not require to be encumbered. Nevertheless, quick though he undoubtedly was, no slow mind was ever aided by steadier industry. If there be anything valuable in the history of his progress, it seems to me to consist chiefly in the example of meritorious labour which his case exhibits to young men even of the highest talent. If he had chosen to be idle, no youth would have had a stronger temptation or a better excuse for that habit; because his natural vigour made it easy for him to accomplish far more than his prescribed tasks respectably, without much trouble, and with the additional applause of doing them off hand. But his early passion for distinction was never separated from the conviction, that in order to obtain it, he most work for it.

Accordingly, from his very boyhood, he was not only a diligent, but a very systematic student; and in particular, he got very early into the invaluable habit of accompanying all his pursuits by collateral composition; never for the sake of display, but solely for his own culture. The steadiness with which this almost daily practice was adhered to, would be sufficiently attested by the mass of his writings which happens to be preserved; though these be obviously only small portions of what he must have executed. There are notes of lectures, essays, translations, abridgments, speeches, criticisms, tales, poems, etc.; not one of them done from accidental or momentary impulse, but all wrought

out by perseverance and forethought, with a view to his own improvement. And it is now interesting to observe how very soon he fell into that line of criticism which afterwards was the business of his life. Nearly the whole of his early original prose writings are of a critical character; and this inclination towards analysis and appreciation was so strong, that almost every one of his compositions closes by a criticism on himself.

Of these papers only four, written at Glasgow, remain. They are on the Benevolent Affections, the Immortality of the Soul, the Law of Primogeniture, and Sorcery and Incantation. The one on the Benevolent Affections, extending to about fifty folio pages of ordinary writing, is the earliest of his surviving compositions. Both in its style and its reasoning, it seems to me an extraordinary performance for his age.

He was occasionally assisted in his Glasgow studies by Mr. James Marshall, who was soon afterwards appointed one of the college chaplains; and at last had the charge of the Presbyterian congregation of Waterford, where he died in 1827. He was an able and accomplished man, of considerable colloquial powers, and greatly respected. His pupil and he kept up their acquaintance so long as Mr. Marshall lived.

The pupil was subject at this time, or supposed so, to what he deemed superstitious fears; to cure himself of which he used to walk alone at midnight round the Cathedral and its graveyard, which were then far more solitary than they are now.

After leaving Glasgow, in May 1789, he returned

home, and remained in and about Edinburgh till September 1791, when he went to Oxford. During this long and important interval he seems, fortunately, to have been left entirely to himself. There is no reason to suppose that he attended any of the Edinburgh College classes, except a course of Scotch Law by Professor David Hume (Session 1789-90), and of Civil Law by Mr. Dick (Session 1790-91), and he was not even distracted by companions. He had scarcely a single intimate associate beyond his own relations. The place he most delighted to go to was Herbertshire, in the county of Stirling, belonging to his uncle, William Morehead, Esq., his mother's half-brother. He was strongly attached to that gentleman, and to all his family. His son Robert was his great friend through life. The place was then entire, well kept, and unpolluted by manufactures; the house full of good plate and good pictures, with a sumptuous cellar and a capital library. The happiest days of his youth were those spent there. He once made me go with him from Stirling to see it; but it was deformed and impoverished, and saddened by many painful changes; and he came away, resolving never to see it again.

No period of his youth was passed more usefully than this; when he was left to his own thoughts and to his own occupations. He adhered so steadily, in what he calls the "*Dear, retired, adored, little window*" of his Lawnmarket garret, to his system of self-working, that, though leading a very cheerful and open-air life, the papers of his composition that remain, deducting articles of only a sheet or two,

are about sixty in number. This is not mentioned in order to earn for him the foolish and unfortunate praise too often given to prematurity, but as facts in the history of the individual, and because they reveal the culture which was rewarded by the subsequent harvest. Besides various lighter pages, there are among these exercises translations of Cicero, pro Ligario and pro Milone, an epitome of Gillies's Greece, a Discourse on Ancient and Modern Learning, Notes from Beattie's Essays, Remarks on Composition, chiefly in favour of the reality of happy moments, an Essay on Happiness, one on Physiognomy, a clever and well-written refutation of Lavater, one on Poetry, being an excellent discourse on the poetical character, four sermons, and a long poem on Dreaming. Several other papers of a higher order, however excellent, owe their principal interest now to the criticisms on themselves by which they are closed.

Some of these are as follow:—

"Excerpts carptatim from Blackstone's Commentaries;" being, besides excerpts, a condensed exposition and discussion of the author's doctrines.

Some translations from Livy; among others "*The speech of Appius Claudius against the motion for withdrawing the army from the siege of Veii.*" It is not a bad translation; but the best of it is these closing remarks:—The contents of the preceding pages are certainly not estimable productions, nor are the moments which were spent in their composition to be recalled with that complacency which generally attends the recollection of well-spent time. They are neither, however, totally contemptible, nor alto-

gether without use. The translation is of that vague and licentious nature which scruples not to insert any extraneous ideas which seem entitled to a place, or to omit such as appear to be unjustly admitted. The habits of the oratorical and florid style that I have assumed, though totally improper for any other species of composition, are sometimes beneficial to those, *who, like me, have some prospect of one day speaking in public.* At any rate, the practice of it, as it increases the store of new expressions, has a necessary and rapid tendency to enrich and enlarge our common language; and it appears to me that those benefits are more certainly, or, at least, more easily, acquired from aiming at this sort of luxuriance in translation, than in original composition; both because it is difficult to invent topics so well adapted to the embellishments of oratory as the genius of the ancients has preserved, and chiefly because the mind, not being at all occupied about the sentiments or sense of the work, is at full leisure to attend to the expression, which, in original composition, must always be a secondary object. It is, after all, however, but a work of indolence; and so little exertion is requisite to succeed in it, as well as it is possible for me to succeed, that I suspect there is more of ostentation and self-flattery than real love of knowledge, or desire of improvement, in thus formally writing down what I could go on to translate extempore with very little or no hesitation. To all conscientious rebukes of this nature, I reply in a set form,—It is better than doing nothing.—F. J. December 14th, 1790.

"*An Epitome of Lucretius, on the nature of things,*" ends thus:—"The epitome I have now completed of this beautiful author is, I am sensible, a very disgraceful performance. The poetical beauties of the original are entirely lost; the ingenious climax of argument which he has uniformly adopted, as well as the rhetorical declamation he has employed to enforce them, are also necessarily annihilated in a work which only gives the result of the progress and is contented with barely stating the sum of the reasoning. For any other person's undertaking a work like this, I should, I believe, be as much puzzled to discover a reason, as they may possibly be to account for my attempting it. The explication of the matter is this:—Having heard the philosophy of Lucretius much undervalued, and partly ridiculed, by personages whose condemnation I have been accustomed to regard as an infallible token of merit in the object of it, I resolved as usual to employ my own judgment, either to reverse or confirm their award. A bare perusal I at first thought would be sufficient for this purpose; but so uniformly was I transported and carried away by the charms of the poetry, and the inimitable strength of the expressions, that I generally forgot the subject on which they were displayed—and in the enthusiasm of admiration, lost that cool impartiality which alone can produce a correct judgment. It was necessary, then, to divest the philosophy—the reason—of this poem of that blaze of light, which, by dazzling the senses, prevented them from judging truly. I have done so, and the few preceding pages contain the execu-

tion. This is all I think necessary to write for my future information. The result of my experiment I do not choose to perpetuate. My judgment, I hope, for some years, will not at least be decaying—and while that is not the case, I should wish it always to form its daily opinion from a daily exertion. The authority of our own opinion, though perhaps the least dangerous of any, still participates in those inconveniences which all species of authority create, and while a man's powers are unimpaired, it were a lucky thing if he could every day forget the sentiments of the former, that they might receive the correction or confirmation of a second judgment.—Edinburgh, September 3, 1790.—F. J."

A discourse without any title, but which is on the terms and the ideas, poetry and prose, terminates thus:—"I do not like this piece. But of which of my productions can I not say the same? Here, however, it is said with peculiar energy. The style is glaringly unequal; affectedly plain in the beginning, oratorical in the end. The design is not one, and I am afraid the sentiments not consistent. It is proper to remark that the word prose, which is the only one I can find antithetical to poesy, is not qualified for that station; for it implies, I believe, merely a mechanical distinction, and is properly opposed to verse. This has occasioned part of the confusion I lament. This is not the time to add, or to correct; but before I had done asserting the contrary, I began to suspect that the old ground of discrimination was preferable to my mode of abrogating it, and that we were in the wrong to give a more ex-

tensive meaning to the term poetical, when applied to a sentiment, or genius, which ought only to signify that they were peculiarly fit to be exposed in that style, which (though not from any magical or innate sympathy) had been most usually allotted to the expression of those ideas. Were I to proceed to unfold this new idea at full length, I would very likely, in the course of my defence of it, discover some new obstacle to my belief, which might return me to my abdicated opinion, or perhaps turn me over to yet another, which might serve me in the same way. I have no mind to encounter such a hydra.—F. J."

This is his apology for a translation of part of Racine's Britannicus into blank verse:—"This barbarous version of the elegant Racinè, I feel myself bound to stigmatise with its genuine character, that as often as the proofs of my stupidity, displayed on the foregoing pages, shall mortify my pride, I may be comforted by the instance of candour set forth on this. At those moments, too, I would likewise have it known, that these verses, if so they may be called, were written down just as they were composed, and with more rapidity than I in general blot my prose. Fully satisfied with my performance, and fully convinced that any purpose I had in view is abundantly fulfilled, I think it unnecessary to labour through another act, and have just sensibility enough to restrain me from unnecessarily mangling more of so complete an original. I find myself not a little puzzled to assign any use to which this work may be put. Though, upon reflection, I find that it may

be of some service to me in the labours of future days, and, by being compared with any of my more correct performances, will serve as a perpetual foil, and stimulate my exertion, by showing me how much my late works surpassed my earlier. It would not perhaps be inexcusable if I should insist that, being written with that design, the multiplicity of its imperfections is commendable.—F. J.—Edinburgh, October 29, 1790."

Four *Speeches* are supposed to be addressed to the House of Commons. The first is entitled "*Orationis Exemplar*," the second "*Tenuis*," the third, "*Mediocris*," the fourth, "*Sublimis*." *Exemplar* is on the constitutional control of the Commons over the public expenditure. *Tenuis* urges the abolition of the slave trade; and *Mediocris* is a fierce onset on a member who had agreed with him in this, but puts it on a bad ground, and "was somewhat too abstruse and metaphysical for my comprehension." *Sublimis* fulminates against a wretch who had actually defended the trade. But then, "the proceedings of this day, Mr. Speaker, have caused me to feel more shame and sorrow than I ever believed could fall to the lot of integrity and honour; and I am the more severely affected by their oppression, as they have assailed me from a quarter whence they were little expected, and have flowed from a source which I used to regard as the fountain of my happiness and pride," etc.

"*My opinions of some authors*" is a collection of short critical judgments. He says in a note, "I have only ventured to characterise those *who have actually undergone my perusal*." Yet they are fifty in

number; and besides most of the English classics, include Fénélon, Voltaire, Marmontel, Le Sage, Molière, Racine, Rousseau, Rollin, Buffon, Montesquieu, etc. His perusal of many of these must have been very partial; yet it is surprising how just most of his conceptions of their merits and defects are. Many of these criticisms, especially of English writers, such as Dryden, Locke, and Pope, are written in a style of acute and delicate discrimination, and express the ultimate opinions of his maturer years. Johnson, as might be expected of a youth, is almost the only one whom he rates far higher then than he did afterwards.

There are twelve *Letters*, each somewhat longer than a paper of the Spectator, addressed to an imaginary "My dear Sir," and subscribed by *Philosophus, Simulator, Proteus, Scrutatar, Solomon*, etc., and all dated July 1789. They are all on literary and philosophical subjects, lively and well composed. One of them is upon *Criticism*—by no means the best, but now curious from its subject. It explains the importance of the art, and the qualities of the sound critic.

Between November 1789 and March 1790, there are thirty-one essays, each about the same length with these letters. They are full of vigorous thinking, and of powerful writing; and a mere statement of these subjects will show his fertility. They are entitled:—

1. On Human Happiness.
2. On a State of Nature.
3. On Slavery.
4. On Sincerity and Self-love.
5. On Indolence.
6. On the Praise of former Ages.
7. The Superiority of the Sexes.
8. Of Man.
9. Of the Love of Fame.
10. Of Fancy.

11. On Jealousy.
12. Celibacy and Marriage.
13. Of Love.
14. Of Man.
15. Of Local Emotion.
16. Ancient and Modern Learning.
17. On the Fate of Genius.
18. On Death.
19. Of a town Life.
20. Of Human Instinct.
21. On Novel-reading.
22. On New Year's Day.
23. On Beaux-ism.
24. On Beauty.
25. On the Poetic Character.
26. On Fortitude.
27. The Use of Philosophy.
28. The Use of Ridicule.
29. Of Literary Habits.
30. The Companionable Virtues.
31. Of the foregoing Essays.

This last discourse is as follows:—"As I think this sort of trivial writing serves very little purpose in the line of improvement, I believe I am now writing the last essay of this size and style, that shall ever be reduced to legible characters. Dr. Johnson has spent papers in measuring the syllables of blank verse, and surely I may employ part of one to justify my own conduct, and satisfy myself of the reasons which induced me to reduce to permanency the vague and trifling conceptions of my mind upon the most trite topics of general declamation. It was, I thought, and so far I surely did think justly, a very essential point for a young man to acquire the habit of expressing himself with ease upon subjects which he is unavoidably [illegible] one time or another to talk of. This, to be sure, might perhaps have been attained, in a degree adequate to all common occasions, without being at the trouble to write down all that I said, or might have said, on them; and as the habits of writing and speaking are not quite reciprocal, the plan of accustoming myself to speak a great deal upon them may perhaps appear better calculated for this purpose. But besides that, I

thus avoid many inaccuracies, and as I am in Scotland, many improprieties, I can spare auditors from the fatigue of being the tools and vehicles of my experiment, and save myself from the reputation of talkativeness and folly. But though the habit of speaking easily be a very valuable one, that of thinking correctly is undoubtedly much more so. These, too, cannot be attained by mere mechanical practice, and an earlier exertion of these powers with which every one is endued is absolutely necessary to confirm it.

"The human mind, at least mine, which is all I have to do with, is such a chaotic confused business, such a jumble and hurry of ideas, that it is absolutely impossible to follow the train and extent of our ideas upon any one topic, without more exertion than the conception of them required. To remedy this, and to fix the bounds of our knowledge and belief on any subject, there is no way but to write down, deliberately and patiently, the notions which first naturally present themselves on that point; or if we refuse any, taking care it be such as have assumed a place in our minds merely from the influence of education or prejudice, and not those which the hand of reason has planted, and which has been nurtured by the habit of reflection. There is likewise a subordinate habit, of no little importance, which is more nearly applicable to the uniformity and size of these essays. Though the subjects of which they treat are very various in point of dignity, it is by no means useless that an equal share of time and paper should be allotted to each. The common routine of

mental occupation is so much habituated to little and trivial subjects, that it is requisite to treat even more sublime topics in the same style and fashion, if we would have them received. As in early ages a moral writer is obliged to convey his instruction in the form of a fable, a parable, or a tale, we have as frequent occasion to take up . . [torn]

"By habituating myself to this sort of management, I thought I should never want something to say upon trivial subjects—something to the purpose on more important ones. The only other object I had in view, was, perhaps not the least important of the whole, to attempt an imitation of the style and manner of the principal persons who have exhibited their abilities in periodical and short essays. Dr. Johnson, Addison, Mackenzie, and Steele, are the only personages I have attempted to ape, and these it would be absurd in me to cope with. I have at least this consolation, that my emulation can be called by no means little. Of these essays I have little more to say. I have in truth said perhaps already more than they deserve. Though for two reasons it was impossible to avoid their escape; the one, that it was to myself the contained apology is addressed: the other, that I should otherwise have been at a loss how to have filled a sheet, while on the first lines I declared that such was its limitation, an excuse which will often be necessary for many absurdities in the preceding leaves of this pacquet. Simplicity, and not elegance, is the quality I have chiefly studied. In some, the language, in others the sentiment, was principally attended to. In all, however, originality

of both was as much as possible endeavoured to be displayed."

But the most curious of these youthful compositions is a paper of about seventy folio pages, entitled "*Sketch of my own character,*" dated 23d November 1790 on the first page, and 12th December 1790 on the last. It is so singular a piece of self-analysis for eighteen, that I have sometimes been inclined to put it into the appendix; but it is better not. Though well written, and full of striking observations, it is seldom safe to disclose descriptions by a man of himself. Even when perfectly candid, and neither spoiled by the affectation of making himself better nor worse than he really was, they are apt to be misunderstood; and their publication, especially near his own day, is certain to provoke ridicule.

Many younger men have distinguished themselves by more surprising displays of early ability. But (as it seems to me) the peculiarity of Jeffrey's case is, that in these efforts he was not practising anything that depended on positive rule, or could be found laid formally down in books, or implied chiefly the possession of a good memory. His science was life, and its philosophy; which he prosecuted apparently in order to acquire that power which enables its possessor to form correct perceptions of what is true in matters resolving into mere opinion. The merit of these and subsequent exercises resolves into judgment and taste, as applied to subjects which admit of no absolute criterion, and on which there is little to be learned except from the teacher within. His doctrines and decisions, when he is serious, and

not merely upholding a theme, are generally just; and even when they are wrong, the delicacy of the discrimination, the richness of the views, and the animation of the style, are indisputable. The wonder is how such ideas got into so young a head, or such sentences into so untaught a pen.

It was about this time (1790 or 1791) that he had the honour of assisting to carry the biographer of Johnson, in a state of great intoxication, to bed. For this he was rewarded next morning by Mr. Boswell, who had learned who his bearers had been, clapping his head, and telling him that he was a very promising lad, and that "If you go on as you've begun, you may live to be a Bozzy yourself yet."

He left Edinburgh for Oxford towards the end of September 1791, with his father, his brother, and Mr. Napier, who afterwards married his oldest sister. They loitered and visited so much that they took a fortnight to reach their destination. He had been at Oxford before, but only passing through it; and after being left there, felt a pang on his first entire loneliness. It may seem to be rather an unreasonable pang for a youth going to so bright a country as England, and to a place with so many attractions as Oxford. But with whatever cordiality Jeffrey entered into social scenes, it was always on affection that his real happiness was dependent. He ever clung to hearts. As soon as any excitement that kept him up was over, his spirit, though strong, and his disposition, though sprightly, depended on the presence of old familiar friends. He scarcely ever took even a professional journey of a day or two alone without

helplessness and discomfort. When left to himself, therefore, for the first time, at a distance from home, it was according to his nature that he should feel a lowness which gave an unfavourable inclination, from the very first, to his Oxford impressions.

This place was not then what it is now. Jeffrey went there eager for improvement, by literary energy, and as he knew it only by the echo of its fame, he thought of it as purely a great seat of learning and of education, and of all the appropriate habits. No wonder that, with such ideas, he was shocked on finding some things in the reality of the place different from what he had expected. This was especially the case at Queen's, the College he entered, which was then not distinguished by study and propriety alone.

However, he neither gave his new comrades, nor his own candour, a very long trial. In a letter to the late Mr. Robertson of Inches, one of his Glasgow companions, dated 23d October 1791, being within a week of his arrival, he describes his fellow-students as a set of "*pedants, coxcombs, and strangers*"—the last quality, no doubt, being the worst in his sight. On the 19th he wrote to his sister,—"Dear Mary, Shut up alone in my melancholy apartment,—a hundred miles at least distant from all those with whom I have been accustomed to live,—surrounded by chapels and libraries and halls,—with hardly an acquaintance to speak to,—and not a friend to confide in,—what do I feel—what shall I write? If my writing must be the expression of my sensation, I must speak only of regret, and write only an account

of my melancholy. But I feel too keenly the pain of such a sensation to think of communicating a share of it through the sympathy of those I love. Fancy yourself in my place,—but two days parted from my father and brother,—with the prospect of many irksome and weary days before I shall meet them again—ignorant of the forms and duties of my new situation—diffident of my own proficiency—and apprehensive of destroying my own happiness by disappointing the expectations of my friends—fancy yourself thus, and I think you will be able to comprehend my situation. But it is cruel to make you share in it even in fancy. I should have told you I was happy, and made you so, in the belief of my report; but let us pass from this. It is a noble thing to be independent—to have totally the management and direction of one's person and conduct; and this is what I enjoy here (did I not always so?); for except being obliged to attend prayers at seven every morning, and at five every evening—except that, I say, and the necessity of coming to the common hall at three to eat my dinner, and to all the lectures of whatever denomination at some other hours—I have the absolute and uncontrolled disposal of myself in my own hands. I am dependent upon nobody to boil my kettle or mend my fire. Not I. I am alone in my rooms—for you must know I have no less than three—and need not permit a single soul to come into them except when I please. But you wish to know perhaps how long I have enjoyed this monarchy. On Wednesday morning my father, John, and Napier, departed for Buxton,

and left me here, alone and melancholy, in a strange land. The rooms I had chosen could not be ready for me before night, and I sauntered about from street to street, and from college to college. I would not recall the sensations of that morning, were not those of the present hour too similar to let me forget them. I felt as if I were exposed to starve upon a desert island; as if the hour of my death were at hand, and an age of torture ready to follow it. I came to dinner at the common hall—got a little acquainted with one or two of the students, and kept in their company, for I was afraid of solitude till I retired to sleep. Why must I always dream that I am in Edinburgh? The unpacking of my trunk rendered me nearly mad. I cannot yet bear to look into any of my writings. I have not now one glimpse of my accustomed genius nor fancy. O! my dear, retired, adored little window; I swear I would forfeit all hopes and pretensions to be restored once more to it and to you, could I do it with honour and with the applause of others. But this is almost mad too I think. I came to study law—and I must study Latin, and Greek, and Rhetoric, and Grammar, and Ethics, and Logic, and Chemistry, and Anatomy, and Astronomy—and Law afterwards, if I please—that is, I must attend lectures upon all these subjects if there be any, and pass examinations in them by and by. By Heaven I am serious, and they will allow neither absurdity nor inconvenience in the practice."

Six weeks after this he tells his cousin (and a great favourite, Miss Crockett, afterwards Mrs.

Murray)—"This place has no latent charms. A scrutiny of six weeks has not increased my attachment. It has, however, worn off my disgust; and knowing that neither the place, nor its inhabitants, nor their manners, can be changed by my displeasure, I have resolved to withdraw that displeasure, which only tortured myself, and to fancy that this is the seat of elegance, and virtue, and science. But I have made a vow not to speak again upon the subject."

Even the social habits of his new friends were unsatisfactory. "My dear Miss (his sister Mary, 6th March 1792), don't you think it a pity, when the moon* shines in all the majesty of silence—when every breeze is sunk to rest—and every star is glowing on high—don't you think it a pity to waste such an hour as this—an hour which so seldom shines upon us here—in reading such infernal uninteresting stuff, as is almost too bad for the cloudiest day in November? I think so upon my soul; and, therefore, after trying two or three pages, and finding I did not understand one syllable, I laid aside Heineccius, half in triumph and half in despair, set the candlestick a-top of him, and took up my pen to converse with you. I wish it were a speaking trumpet for your sake."

"Is there anything, do you think, Cara, so melancholy as a company of young men without any feeling, vivacity, or passion? We must not expect,

* Lord Jeffrey had a great admiration for the moon and its effect in landscapes. He has described this in one of his letters quoted at the end of this volume.

here, that warmth and tenderness of soul which is to delight and engage us; but let us at least have some life, some laughter, some impertinence, wit, politeness, pedantry, prejudices—something to supply the place of interest and sensation. But these blank parties! oh! the quintessence of insipidity. The conversation dying from lip to lip—every countenance lengthening and obscuring in the shade of mutual lassitude—the stifled yawn contending with the affected smile upon every cheek—and the languor and stupidity of the party gathering and thickening every instant by the mutual contagion of embarrassment and disgust. For when you enter into a set of this kind, you are robbed of your electricity in an instant, and by a very rapid process are cooled down to the state of the surrounding bodies. In the name of heaven, what do such beings conceive to be the order and use of society? To them it is no source of enjoyment; and there cannot be a more complete abuse of time, wine, and fruit." "This law is a vile work. I wish I had been bred a piper. For these two months I have conceived nothing distinctly. For all that time I have had a continual vision of I know not what beautiful and sublime things, floating and glittering before my eyes. I at first thought it was a fit of poetry; but upon trial I could find neither words nor images. When I offered to lay hold upon any of its beauties, the splendid show vanished and grew confused, like the picture of the moon you may have tried to scoop up out of the water."

After only seven months' residence, he had a

prospect of escaping, and says to his sister (22d April 1792), "Our long vacation commences about the end of June, and I suppose my residence at Oxford will finally conclude at that period. But for Scotland—Scotland! I have not the same assurance of visiting it at that time. Yet I have never heard anything, even a hint, to the contrary from my father, whose prohibition alone can disappoint me. Ah, Cara! you cannot imagine how much I languish to return; with what visions of happiness my fancy deludes me when I permit it to feign myself practising at the Scotch Bar with plentiful success! I believe it is the prospect of the expense I must occasion by proceeding on my present line, and the uncertainty of my success, that renders my situation so unpleasing. I have an idea that I am happier than most people I see here; yet I am the only one that thinks of complaining of his situation, or who does not appear perfectly satisfied with himself."

At last, in June 1792, his short connection with Oxford closed, and its end was thus recorded by himself. His admission had been attested by the following certificate, or whatever else it is called. "Oxoniæ, Octobris 17mo, Anno Domini 1791. Quo die comparuit coram me Franciscus Jeffrey, e Coll. Reg. Arm. Fil., et subscripsit Articulis Fidei et Religionis; et juramentum suscepit de agnoscenda suprema regiæ majestatis potestate; et de observandis statutis, privilegeiis, et consuetudinibus hujus universitatis.—Sam. Dennis, *pro* Vice Can." Below which the said Franciscus writes, "Hanc universitatem,

tædio miserrime affectus, tandem hilaris reliqui, Ter. Kal. Jul. 1792; meque hisce obligationibus privilegiisque subduxi.—F. JEFFREY." And on the other side of the parchment he sets down a list of twenty-seven of his acquaintances and a tutor, with a character, in one line, of each. The tutor is soon disposed of. "Pedant," is all he gets. Such a one is "honest, plain, sensible;" one "polite, lazy, quick, dissipated;" one "merry, good-natured, noisy, foolish;" one "stiff, ignorant, silent, passive, foolish;" and so he goes on through the whole twenty-seven; never, but in one instance, all complimentary. This instance is in the case of Maton, whom I understand to have been his future friend, the late Dr. Maton, described "philosopher," as he really was.

In spite of the prevailing dissipation and idleness, he himself was a diligent student in his own way. Sir John Stoddart, who knew him there, says, that though "not a reading man, he must have devoted much time to literature in general; for his conversation, though always gay and lively, evinced a large store of information." Accordingly, he himself used to acknowledge, that though on the whole disappointed with Oxford, his time there had not been lost totally. This indeed is implied in the fact, that during these nine months he wrote a great many papers, of which eighteen happen to have been preserved.

Some of them are short and immaterial, such as a translation of the life of Agricola, and another sermon; which last seems to be a species of composi-

tion rather seductive to literary laymen. His are about as good as any sermons can be, which are got up as mere rhetorical exercises. Several of them were preached, with considerable effect; particularly by Mr. Marshall, whose elocution did justice to the author's style, and by a late respectable minister of our Established Church, who had been a tutor at Herbertshire, and imposed some of them on his congregation so lately as 1825.

Among the longer papers, there is one on Beauty; which is interesting, as the germ of his treatise on that subject, in the Encyclopædia Britannica, many years afterwards. It is in the form of a dialogue between him and Eugenius, in which the two speakers discuss the nature of the qualities by which objects are recommended to taste. The whole theories of association, of utility, of properties inherent in the objects, or of its all resolving into the state of the observer's own mind, etc., are discussed with ability and liveliness. He inclines to the association principle, of which the following is his first illustration:—"For what is it, continued I, stopping and stretching out my arm, as I pointed to the landscape around us,—what else is it, do you think, Eugenius, that enables this retired valley, that peaceful stream, or these velvet hills, to warm and transport my bosom with the satisfaction in which it now overflows —what is it but the talisman, and the proof it affords of the happiness and security of so many of my brethren as are employed and supported, and made happy in the cultivation and produce thereof? See! added I eagerly, and grasped his arm with

violence—see that little dim distant light which shines like a setting star on the horizon; is there anything in the whole circle and series of objects with which we are surrounded on every side that pleases and affects you more than its soft and tranquil light,—than the long line of trembling fire with which it has crossed the lake at the bottom of the cliff under which it burns? And what is it that yields this simple object so high a power of pleasing, but that secret and mysterious association by which it represents to us the calmness and rustic simplicity of the inhabitants of that cottage; by which we are transported within its walls, and made to see and to observe the whole economy and occupation of the household?"

A paper on the poetry of Hayley and Miss Seward is an anticipation, both in style and opinion, of one of his future reviews. Another, without a title, but which, in its matter, appears to be on the Philosophy of Happiness, though able, is vague, for which he thus censures himself:—"I cannot write either with the ease or the rapidity with which some time ago I used to astonish myself. I cannot think it a consequence of this, that I should write prolixly and diffusely. This I meant to fill a sheet; it is, as usual, very unequal in style, in some passages ridiculously affected, in others disgustingly careless. The argument is not good, nor the arrangements luminously applied. My meaning is here, however, I believe—scattered and imperfect, to be sure, but I think it is here."

Another article, without a title, begins thus:—

"All that regards man is interesting to me. Everything which explains his character and his contradictions; every investigation that promises to illustrate the phenomena which he unfolds, I pursue and explore with insatiable eagerness and affection." Then follows what appears to be a discourse on the sources and correctives of human wickedness, which, as usual, is not done justice to by the author himself:—"Opus deductum; the work is brought to a conclusion, has a full and uniform connection, and is the sincere advocate of my own sentiments. This is all that can be said in its favour. The enumeration is defective throughout, the style loose, and in some passages intolerably diffuse. Besides, the whole performance is more crowded with commonplace than a subject on which I was so sincere should have admitted."

A long "*Speech on the slave, on the model of Demosthenes,*" is, of course, not the least like Demosthenes, nor even a speech—it is a declamatory essay. I only mention it for the sake of the description of the style of the model which closes the imitation. "On the model of Demosthenes! admirably executed! I wonder which of the characteristics of that orator I had it in my mind to imitate while I covered these pages. There can hardly be anything more unlike the style, though at times it is evident I have been jumping at that too; and the solicitude with which I have avoided special narratives and individual illustration is still more inconsistent with the instant peculiarity of that model. Now, I knew all this when I [illegible] my intention of imitation. What

was it, then, that I designed to imitate? That perspicuity and simplicity of arrangement, that direct and unremitting tendency to the single object of the discourse, that naked and undisguised sincerity of sentiment, that perpetual recurrence to acknowledged and important positions, which are, certainly, the most intrinsic and infallible marks of the orations of Demosthenes. No intermission of argument, no digressive embellishment, no ostentatious collocation of parts, no artificial introduction, no rhetorical transition, is to be found in the pages of this accomplished and animated orator. He falls from argument to argument with the most direct and unaffected simplicity; and at every transition from argument to exhortation, and from exhortation to reproach, he holds the one object of his discourse fully in his own eyes, and in those of his auditors. This I say by way of self-defence, that I may not be thought to have mistaken the character of this writer, whom my imitation evinces me to have understood so ill. In one respect it is similar to my model;—it is sincere, and has not declined any part of the argument that occurred. Towards the end it is most defective; the turgid breaking in upon me unawares. I never read ten pages on the question in my life. I pretend, therefore, that this is original." (14th April 1792.)

A full and able paper, without a title, contains a spirited argument against the notion of ascribing every odd occurrence to Divine interposition.

These are not the fruits of idleness.

But there was one accomplishment of which he

was particularly ambitious, but failed to attain. He left home with the dialect and the accent of Scotland strong upon his lips; and always contemplating the probability of public speaking being his vocation, he was bent upon purifying himself of the national inconvenience. "You ask me (says he to Mr. Robertson) to drop you some English ideas. My dear fellow, I am as much, nay more, a Scotchman than I was while an inhabitant of Scotland. My opinions, ideas, prejudices, and systems, are all Scotch. The only part of a Scotchman I mean to abandon, is the language; and language is all I expect to learn in England."

He certainly succeeded in the abandonment of his habitual Scotch. He returned, in this respect, a conspicuously altered lad. The change was so sudden and so complete, that it excited the surprise of his friends, and furnished others with ridicule for many years. But he was by no means so successful in acquiring an English voice. With an ear which, though not alert in musical perception, was delicate enough to feel every variation of speech, what he picked up was a high-keyed accent, and a sharp pronunciation. Then the extreme rapidity of his utterance, and the smartness of some of his notes, gave his delivery an air of affectation, to which some were only reconciled by habit and respect. The result, on the whole, was exactly as described by his friend the late Lord Holland, who said that though Jeffrey "*had lost the broad Scotch at Oxford, he had only gained the narrow English.*" However, the peculiarity wore a good deal off, and his friends

came rather to like what remained of it, because it marked his individuality, and it never lessened the partiality with which his countrymen hailed all his public appearances. Still, as the acquisition of a pure English accent by a full-grown Scotchman, which implies the total loss of his Scotch, is fortunately impossible, it would have been better if he had merely got some of the grosser matter rubbed off his vernacular tongue, and left himself, enencumbered both by it, and by unattainable English, to his own respectable Scotch, refined by literature and good society, and used plainly and naturally, without shame, and without affected exaggeration.

But though the tones and the words of Scotland ceased to be heard in his ordinary speech, they were never obliterated from his memory. He could speak Scotch, when he chose, as correctly as when the Doric of the Lawnmarket of Edinburgh had only been improved by that of Rottenrow of Glasgow; and had a most familiar acquaintance with the vocabulary of his country. Indeed, there was a convenience and respectability in the power of speaking and of thinking Scotch at that period, which later circumstances have impaired. It was habitual with persons of rank, education, and fashion, with eloquent preachers, dignified judges, and graceful women; from all of whose lips it flowed without the reality, or the idea, of vulgarity. Our mere speech was doomed to recede, to a certain extent, before the foreign wave, and it was natural for a young man to anticipate what was coming. But our native *literature* was better fixed; and Jeffrey knew it, and

enjoyed it. He was familiar with the writers in that classic Scotch, of which much is good old English, from Gavin Douglas to Burns. He saw the genius of Scott, and Wilson, and Hogg, and Galt, and others, elicited by the rich mines of latent character and history with which their country abounds, and devoted to the elucidation of the scenes which awakened it; and, of all their admirers, there was not one who rejoiced more, or on better grounds, in the Scotch qualities that constitute the originality and the vivid force of their writings. He felt the power of the beautiful language which they employed, and were inspired by; and, as many of his subsequent criticisms attest, was most anxious for the preservation of a literature so peculiar and so picturesque.

He left Oxford on the 5th of July 1792, having told Miss Crockett the day before, "To-morrow I take off my gown; to-morrow I resign the honours of my academical character, and bear myself for ever from these venerable towers." His absence had diminished even the small number of his former companions; while his increased age and greater fitness for society aggravated the solitude to which he found that he had returned. He used to mention this as the loneliest period of his life. But its loneliness did him no harm. His own family supplied him with objects enough of affection; and a thoughtful mind like his was not the worse for being concentrated on its own pursuits.

He was now nineteen, and his ideas about what he was to do for subsistence or for reputation began

to settle into something definite. Some passages in his letters show that he had occasional visions of living by literature, and chiefly by poetry. But these were only the casual longings of taste, not the prevailing views of his practical judgment. He was at one time in a great fright lest he should have been made a merchant. On the 30th of April 1790, he wrote a sheet of observations "On a mercantile life," not at all favourable to its tendencies on happiness or the mind, and ends by this postscript: *P.S.*— The former part of these observations was written while I myself was a little apprehensive of being made an example of their veracity. They are consequently written with the greatest feeling. From the place where the ink first varies, I wrote merely to give a sort of conclusion to my thoughts; and that I might be more ready, should I ever again have occasion to consider them as a matter of personal concern." But his apprehensions do not seem to have ever been revived; probably because his brother John soon joined a paternal uncle, a merchant in Boston, in America, in the business which had apparently excited them.* He would have made a miserable merchant; for he had a horror of risk, and a strong sense of the value of pecuniary prudence. With a liberality of disposition which was evinced by munificent charity, he had no spirit of adventure, and therefore one shilling certain had charms for him, which twenty shillings doubtful could not impart. He would have made himself or his partners crazy,

* His uncle, the brother of Jeffrey's father, had married a sister of John Wilkes.

by perpetually demonstrating, in the midst of their most solid prosperity, that they were all bankrupt, or must speedily become so.

The law, and in Edinburgh, was plainly his destiny. He thought frequently of the English bar; but his views in that direction were superseded by the strong considerations that decided his friends. His father could not have afforded the expense of his preparation for the English bar; and still less of that costly abeyance by which, after being called to it, practice must be waited for. The bar of his own country was cheaper, less precarious, and less irrecoverable from if it should fail; and a little practice might be expected from some of his own connections. Above all, to the imagination of a father in the position of Mr. Jeffrey senior, the idea of his son being a distinguished counsel in the Supreme Court, and possibly occupying at last a seat on its bench, was perhaps the loftiest conception of family grandeur it could form. He was thus set into the stream of the Scotch bar naturally and irresistibly, and his preparations were made accordingly.

During the winter session of 1792-3, he again attended the Scotch Law lectures of Professor Hume, those of Professor Wyld on the Civil Law, and those of Professor Alexander Tytler on History. He groaned under what he held to be Hume's elaborate dulness. His "notes *taken from*" Tytler—that is, his transfusion of the lectures into his own thoughts—occupy 436 folio pages of his writing, which would be at least double in ordinary manuscript. There is another course from which it is

almost inconceivable that he should have been kept, that of Moral Philosophy by Dugald Stewart. This most eminent person has two reputations, one as an author, and one as a lecturer. Many who know him only as a philosophical writer, venerate him profoundly, both for his philosophy and for the dignified beauty of his style. But this idolatry is not universal. There are some who, admitting his occasional felicity both of thought and of composition, deem him, on the whole, vague and heavy. But I am not aware that there has ever been any difference of opinion with respect to his unsurpassed excellence as a moral teacher. He was one of the greatest of didactic orators. Mackintosh said, truly, that the peculiar glory of Stewart's eloquence consisted in its having "*breathed the love of virtue into whole generations* of pupils." He was the great inspirer of young men. Yet I can discover no evidence that Jeffrey was a pupil in this, to him, congenial class, and many circumstances satisfy me that he was not. Nor can I doubt why. Stewart, though shrinking from every approach to active faction, was known to hold liberal political opinions; and his class door, I believe, was shut to Jeffrey by the same prejudice that had shut John Millar's.

In a letter to his brother in America of the 1st of December 1792, he says, "I cannot think of any material alteration that has taken place among your friends since you left them, except it be a most laudable reformation that has been wrought in my person within this last week; whereby, from a lounging, idling, unhopeful kind of fellow, I have become

a most persevering and indefatigable student, and have no doubt of turning out President of the Court of Session, or chief macer at the least; for I have brought back my views in some degree to the Scotch bar, and half determined to leave the English dignities to their own disposal."

The steadiest affection always subsisted between these brothers, although in nothing, except their mutual regard, was there any resemblance between them. John continued in America, but not without visits home, till about 1807. His commercial concerns did not end very profitably, and some other misfortunes, operating upon feeble health, clouded his latter years. With a dry manner, he was a sensible and intelligent man, much beloved by the few he cared to cultivate.

On the 11th of December 1792, Jeffrey entered the Speculative Society. Insignificant as this may seem, it did more for him than any other event in the whole course of his education. Literary and scientific, and especially debating, societies have long existed in connection with the College of Edinburgh, as they have occasionally in all the other colleges in Scotland; and so beneficial are these institutions, when properly used, so encouraging both for study and for discussion, and so well-timed in reference to the condition of young minds, that it is not easy to understand how any college can succeed without them. The Speculative had been instituted in 1764, and had raised itself above all similar establishments in this country. Fifty-eight years more have passed since Jeffrey joined it, and it still flour-

ishes, and can never expire now, except by the unworthiness of the youths in whose days it shall sink. Jeffrey scarcely required it for improvement in composition; but though he had occasionally tried his speaking powers in one or two obscure and casual associations, he had never been a regular working member of a society like this, on which age and reputation conferred importance, where the awe of order was aided by hereditary respect for not very flexible rules, and superiority was difficult, and every effort to attain it formidable. It was exactly what he required, and he gave himself to it with his whole heart. The period for regular attendance was three years; but his voluntary and very frequent visits were continued for six or seven years more. In the course of these nine or ten years, he had a succession, and sometimes a cluster, of powerful competitors. It is sufficient to mention Sir Walter Scott, with whom he first became acquainted here; Dr. John Thomson; John Allen; David Boyle, now Lord President of the Court of Session; the Rev. Dr. Brunton; the Marquis of Lansdowne; the late Charles, Lord Kinnaird; Dr. Headlam; Francis Horner; The late William Adam, Accountant-General in the Court of Chancery; John A. Murray, and James Moncreiff, both afterwards Judges; Henry Brougham; Lord Glenelg, and his late brother Robert Grant; James Loch, the Honourable Charles Stuart, and William Scarlett. The political sensitiveness of the day at one time obtruded itself rather violently into this hall of philosophical orators; but it soon passed away, and while it lasted, it only

animated their debates, and, by connecting them with public principles and parties, gave a practical interest to their proceedings. The brightest period in the progress of the society was during the political storm that crossed it in 1799.

Jeffrey read five papers in it, viz.—On Nobility, 5th March 1793; on the effects derived to Europe from the discovery of America, 28th January 1794; on the authenticity of Ossian's Poems, 10th February 1795; on Metrical Harmony, 17th February 1795; and on the Character of Commercial Nations, 19th January 1796. The one on Nobility is a defence of inequality of rank, and a discussion of the principles on which it ought to rest, and is greatly above his estimate of it,—"This was written, as the dates testify, in a furious hurry, and delivered in the Speculative within a quarter of an hour after it was finished; in truth it is not finished. And, so far from having received any correction, it was never honoured by a review. Its doctrines are but faintly impressed on my memory. I believe, however, that I am sincere in the greatest number of my assertions. I am conscious that my theory is in several places highly whimsical; and very sensible that my information and my research were throughout very inadequate to the conduct of a subject intricate in itself, and so deeply sunk in the profundities of history, politics, antiquities, and law. The style, though far from being equal, is greatly too diffuse and pompous throughout. Yet there are few faults more excusable to such expositions as this, than that disorderly superfluity of words which

usually swells hasty performances. Anxious to express fully that thought upon which he cannot afford to dwell again, the author confounds himself with a number of tautologous expressions; and, not allowing himself sufficient leisure to ascertain the one luminous and steady position, he flutters rapidly round, giving an imperfect view of what a little coolness might have exhibited entire."

But it was the debates that he chiefly shone in. He took a zealous part in every discussion. I doubt if he was ever once silent throughout a whole meeting. The Tuesday evenings were the most enthusiastic and valuable of his week. It is easy to suppose what sort of an evening it was to Jeffrey when he had to struggle in debate with Lansdowne, Brougham, Kinnaird, and Horner, who, with other worthy competitors, were all in the society at the same time. It has scarcely ever fallen to my lot to hear three better speeches than three I heard in that place,—one on National Character by Jeffrey, one on the Immortality of the Soul by Horner, and one on the Power of Russia by Brougham.

It was here that his feeling about the fewness of his friends ceased. His first acquaintance with the persons I have named, and many others of the best friendships of his life, arose in this society.

No wonder that, forty-three years afterwards, when presiding at a dinner to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the institution, he, in the course of a beautiful address, thus recalled what he owed it. "For his own part, on looking back to that period when he had experience of this society, he could

hardly conceive anything in after life more to be envied, than the recollection of that first burst of intellect, when, free from scholastic restraint, and throwing off the thraldom of a somewhat servile docility, the mind first aspired to reason, and to question nature for itself, and, half wondering at its own temerity, first ventured, without a guide, into the mazes of speculation, or tried its unaided flight into the regions of intellectual adventure, to revel uncontrolled through the bright and boundless realms of literature and science. True it was, that all those hopes were not realised; that those proud anticipations were often destined to be humbled; but still, could it be doubted that they were blessings while they lasted, or that they tended to multiply the chances of their being one day realised? He was afraid he was detaining them, but he could not avoid stating what had been so long familiar to his own mind respecting institutions of this kind, which, he considered, under proper guidance, calculated to develop the seeds of generous emulation, to lay the foundation and trace the outlines of that permanent and glorious triumph to be achieved in after life."*

In June 1793, he lost his uncle, Mr. Morehead, and saw in that event the ultimate loss of his happy days at Herbertshire. In announcing this calamity to his brother (29th June 1793), he says—"On the 18th of this month we lost a most excellent man, and an undoubted friend, in our worthy Mr. Morehead, who died at Herbertshire on that day, after a

* See a minute and excellent history of the society, by the ordinary members, published in 1845, p. 68.

short and distressing illness. A man whose amiable and elegant manners were by far his least accomplishment; whose unruffled gentleness flowed from the pure benevolence of his heart; whom envy could not injure, nor malice hate. He was the only man I have ever known, whose character was eminent by virtue, without the taint of a single vice; the friend of the friendless, the peacemaker, the liberal. There is no event that I at present recollect, that has occasioned me more sorrow."

On the 30th of August 1793, he got one of his first views of the scenes he was to act in, by being present as a spectator, at the case of Mr. Thomas Muir, advocate, who was that day dealt with at Edinburgh for what was then called sedition. There was a story about the mother of that unfortunate man having dreamed that he would one day be Lord Chancellor. Jeffrey says to Robert Morehead (31st August 1793), "I shall only add, that I staid fourteen hours at the Chancellor's trial, who was this day condemned to banishment for fourteen years." Sir Samuel Romilly saw that trial too. Neither of them ever forgot it. Jeffrey never mentioned it without horror.

"I have been busy (he writes to John, 4th November 1793) ever since my return in preparing for my civil law trials, which will be held in the beginning of our session, and in endeavouring to amass a sufficient stock of patience to carry me through the relentless fogs with which I am menaced by the winter. I got a fit of spleen, on my birthday, I think by recollecting that I had been crawling

between heaven and earth for twenty unprofitable years, without use, distinction, or enjoyment,"

These trials took place on the 28th of November 1793. In alluding to the approaching ceremony he told his brother (25th September 1793), "I have lounged away the weeks which have passed since I wrote you last in a state of more complete indolence than I have been able to enjoy for several months; and it is not without some emotion of alarm that I look forward to the drudgery which is preparing for me in winter. Yet I cannot say that the interval of inaction has been distinguished by any feeling of peculiar satisfaction, or enlivened by any occurrence which ought to make its remembrance pleasing. Yet tranquillity is delightful; and it is with regret that the mind rouses itself to active exertion, after it has languished for a long time in the pensive bowers of recollection. It is certainly giving a very wretched account of my employment of time; but I live less for the present than for the past, and rarely look into the future, except for the end of some scheme whose birth my retrospection has been contemplating. I have been, however, yawning over my civil law, in which I take my trials on my return; and have besides found time to write a variety of sonnets, and to dissuade Robert Morehead from the temptation of a bishopric."

This dissuasive was a very long letter (25th June 1793), advising Morehead not to enter the English Church. One of his reasons was, that if he once got into it, he could never get out. "But there are permanent truths and permanent tempers too, after all.

no doubt; and if you are really persuaded that no future day, nor any future occurrence, can alter your sentiments, I have nothing to do but to congratulate you, and sigh for myself, who have lived on this earth very nearly one score of years, and am about to pass some professional trials in a few months, who have no fortune but my education, and who would not bind myself to adhere exclusively to the law for the rest of my life for the bribery of all the emoluments it has to bestow."

This "tremendous epistle," as, from its length, he calls it, did not convince the person it was addressed to. Mr. Morehead took orders, and never once desired to leave that church, to which he was sincerely attached, and into which he carried all the kind and lowly qualities that grace it. After some slender preferments, he became Rector of Easington in Yorkshire. He published some very pleasing sermons; and though he published very little poetry, its composition was one of his habitual enjoyments. Simple, humble, pious, and benevolent, —devoted to his official duties, of literary habits, contented with every position in which it pleased Providence to place him,—he could not be but beloved by all who knew his quiet virtues. To Jeffrey, who had been his playmate in the fields of Herbertshire, and throughout life was never estranged from him one moment, and knew his very heart, he was an object of special affection. No two creatures of the same species could be more unlike; but in mutual regard they were one.

After committing himself by the rather expensive

step of his first trials, there are some interesting gleams, in his letters to his brother, of his feelings and anticipations.

"I shall study on to the end of my days. Not law, however, I believe, though that is yet in a manner to begin; but something or other I shall—I am determined. I told you, I think in my last letter, I had just surmounted my first public trials. I think you know that I cannot be brought up on my last till after the interval of twelve months. So that I shall yet have a reasonable period for the preparation of my first speech."—(28th December 1793.) "I wish you would let me know what sort of a thing it is to be a merchant, and whether you think I should like it; for, without any affectation, I have very often deep presages that the law will not hold me. There is such a shoal of us, and I have seen so much diligence and genius, and interest, neglected, that there would be insolence in reckoning upon success. For my own disappointment, I should not grieve above measure, but there are others through whom it may affect me."—(1st February 1794.)

"I have been so closely occupied in hearing and writing law lectures ever since November, that a short interval of leisure very much distresses me. For the habit I have acquired, of doing nothing but my task, prevents me from laying it out to any advantage, and the shortness of its duration will not allow me to supplant that habit. If this be a specimen of the life which I am hereafter to lead, though the stupidity which accompanies it may prevent me

from feeling much actual uneasiness, yet the remembrance of other days will always be attended with regret. That sort of resignation of spirit which was favoured by the depression and the confinement of winter, is beginning to fail on the approach of spring, and, raised by the rustling of the western gales, and the buds, and the sun, and the showers, my spirits have awakened once again, and are execrating the torpor in which they have been lost. This I write to you merely because it is what is uppermost in my mind at present, and because I would have you accustomed, in due time, not to look for my success as a man of business. Every day I see greater reason for believing that this romantic temper will never depart from me now. Vanity indulged it at the first, but it has obtained the support of habit, and, as I think, of reason."—(2d March 1794.) "My notions of philosophy rather lead me to consider a steady contemplation of the worst as the best preparation for its possible occurrence. But my temper is too sanguine, and my activity, I believe, too great, to render it possible for such occasional anticipation to induce a habit of dejection or remissness. In the meantime, I will tell you truly, again, that my prospects of success are not very flattering; though I cannot help believing that this impression will not greatly abate my efforts to ensure it, though it may lighten the disappointment which would attach upon my failure. I do not know whether I may have changed, or you may have forgotten, but I assure you that at present I look upon myself as a person of very singular perseverance, and know very few

who will engage in greater labours with expectation less sanguine."—(Glasgow, 29th August 1794.)

He was possessed of a notion, at this time, that he hated Edinburgh, and liked Glasgow. "After a long abode in the country, I am disgusted with everything that offers itself to me in the town, and cannot comprehend the force of those motives which have led men to bury themselves there. There was something very soothing to my feelings in the tranquil and easy manner in which my days succeeded one another at Herbertshire; and so much peace, and so much innocence, and so much simplicity, I shall not very easily find in Edinburgh. Indeed I hate this place more and more, and in January as well as in June. For I am almost alone in the midst of its swarms, and am disturbed with its filth, and debauchery, and restraint, without having access to much of the virtue or genius it may contain."—(Edinburgh, 1st June 1794.) "It is now nearly two months since I have been in Edinburgh, and I do not yet know how long it may be before I return to it. There are few places which have less hold upon my affections, and few in which I feel myself so truly solitary."—(Glasgow, 29th August (1794.)

This short-lived fancy was not unnatural at the moment. He had got into none of the society of either place, but the privation which mortified him in his native city was not felt in Glasgow, where he was a stranger. And there was a "*Hebe*" at this time in the latter place.

What he thought the severity, which only meant the dullness, of his legal studies, was relieved by a

continuance of literary labour. After leaving Oxford he wrote several papers, besides the Speculative Society essays, which, without any exact observance of chronological order, may as well be disposed of now, before bringing him into his professional life. Very few of them remain.

One is a translation of Tacitus de Moribus, dated October 1792, of which he says—"This is very unequally translated. There are, however, more passages to be censured than to be praised. Yet the greatest part of them are capable of amendment, and by taking the pitch from the highest, a translation, certainly not inelegant, might easily be laboured out. The most general fault is prolixity. For incorrectness I take rather to be a quality of everything written as this has been done, than of any genius whatever. I shall never correct nor copy this, and in time may mistake the blunder of precipitation for that of ignorance."

Two abstracts, one of the Wealth of Nations, and one of the Novum Organum, though short, bring out the substance of these works with condensed fullness.

A translation of Demosthenes against Ctesiphon is as good as most such translations.—(Herbertshire, 22d July 1794.)

There is a long and very interesting paper entitled "*Politicks*," dated, on the top of the first page, "Edinburgh, April 4th, 1793," and at the end of the last, "Edinburgh, 29th December 1793." It occupies about 200 folio pages. His criticism on it closes thus:—"There are many things which no man

would be justified, even in my opinion, for speaking to the world; but I am not sensible that there is anything here which I ought to have been ashamed of having thought. My conscience has no kind of burden. My errors, I am sure, are those of ignorance, and cannot, by any party, be construed into guilt, as long as I have diffidence enough, or prudence enough to keep them secret. I wrote this partly with the design mentioned in the beginning, (though I have become a great deal more neutral since April), and partly that I might know what I thought, and upon what reasons my opinions were founded,—circumstances in which, if I do not greatly err, many would require some illumination. The style of this work is not so unequal as that of some of my other compositions, though certainly most tolerable where it has been least attended to. I think just so much of this work, that I wish I had bestowed more attention on its composition, and adhered more to plainness and to practicability. Yet it is not all system, and I am sure there is none of it party."

The statement that "There are many things which no man would be justified, even in my opinion, for speaking to the world," is a striking indication of the terror which was then felt of any disclosure of independent opinions. So far as I can judge, there is not one expression or one sentiment in the whole paper which might not have been avowed, though perhaps not with the approbation of every Tory, at any time within the last forty, or even fifty years; yet he was then afraid to utter them. It is a disquisition on British affairs, foreign

and domestic. After a powerful exposition of the principle, that forms of government are of far less importance to the happiness of the people than the good administration of any system to which they have been accustomed, he discusses the duties and the rights of the rulers and of the subjects of this country, under the constitution which has grown round them. His doctrines are those of a philosophical Whig; firm to the popular principles of our government, and consequently firm against any encroachment, whether from the monarchical or the democratical side. He is hostile to the recently proclaimed war with France, and to the policy and objects of the party that had embarked in it. But it is a perfectly fair and temperate examination of matters always open to discussion, and is written with great richness of reflection and illustration, and with great force and animation of style. The views expressed in this essay adhered to him through life. Indeed he says that they will. His beginning is, "History will record the events which signalise the present crisis, and posterity will contemplate with a cool and unprejudiced eye those parties, principles, and actions, which now divide mankind so widely. But history will not record, what it may be pleasant hereafter to review, the personal opinions and present impressions of an observer, who, if he cannot pretend the impartiality of absolute indifference, may yet claim the credentials of candour, sincerity, and moderation, in the principles he has embraced. Though the frenzy of opposition may often beget a similar violence, in a mind of itself disposed to

accommodation, and though several circumstances of unpleasing recollection have attempted to impose upon my judgment by such exasperation, I am pretty confident that the opinion I am now about to deliver will continue to influence my political sentiments as long as subjects, in themselves so cumbrous and fatiguing, shall retain any decided place in my mind. I am enrolled in no party, and initiated in no club; habit has added nothing to the confidence of my trust in reason, nor raised any illegal obstacle to the repetition of her triumphs by the demolition of my errors. Neither vanity, nor interest, nor avarice, have hitherto had any effect in warping the political tenets of one who is too mean to catch a glimpse of glory, and too honest to belie the assertion of his soul for the sake of riches or promotion. Those seductive principles may one day overthrow that integrity which they have not yet assailed; and even I may smile with contempt, as I overlook those words, and remember that they were written neither to be seen nor to be obeyed, but merely to perpetuate the memory of that innocence which is never despised till it has ceased to exist."

I am tempted to quote one other passage, neither from its importance nor its originality, but because it evinces a spirit in advance of the age. If there was any principle that was reverenced as indisputable by almost the whole adherents of the party in power sixty, or even fifty, or perhaps even forty years ago, it was, that the ignorance of the people was necessary for their obedience to the law. A concession was always made in Scotland, in favour of

such teaching as might at least enable the poor to read the Bible; but even this was a step beyond England; and in both countries the expediency of a more extended and a higher popular education was considered as a mere Jacobinical pretence. Jeffrey, writing in 1793, says, "The violence of the multitude is indeed to be dreaded, but it will not be violent unless it be uninformed. It is superfluous to add, that a people who are enlightened are likely to be in the same proportion contented; and that the diffusion of knowledge is yet more essential, perhaps, to their tranquillity than it is to their freedom. Those who are in possession of the truth, and of the principles on which it is founded, will not be moved by all the artifice that sophistry can employ, and will laugh to scorn those dangerous impostors who succeed in seducing the ignorant. As a wise man rarely suffers from the errors which delude the vulgar, so that vulgar, when informed and illuminated, may listen in safety to the charms against which it was not proof before; as the twig that was agitated with any breeze, may come at length to sustain the force of the tempest without bending."

But the most curious of all his early pursuits was the poetical one. There is nothing wonderful in any young man being allured into this region; because of all ambitions, poetry, where its laurels appear to be attainable, is the least capable of being resisted; and where the rhythmical form is mistaken for the poetical substance, it is reduced to an easy, yet attractive, mechanical art. But none of Jeffrey's lines were written, as youthful lines so often

are, for immediate display. His being in the habit of making verses seems to have been known only to his brother and sisters, and to Robert Morehead; and, like his other early exertions, were almost never mentioned afterwards by himself. If he had practised the art as a mere superficial accomplishment, he would have cared less for his addiction to it being known. But he plainly had a higher and more distant end in view, and sometimes fancied that the glories of genuine poetry were not certainly beyond his grasp.

Writing from Oxford to his sister (25th October 1791), he says, "*I feel I shall never be a great man unless it be as a poet;*" and "I have almost returned to my water system, for I have scarcely tasted wine this fortnight; of course I have spent it mostly in solitude, and I think most pleasantly of any since I came here. This way of life does certainly nourish a visionary and romantic temper of mind, which is quite unfit for this part of the world, and which makes one first be stared at, and then neglected. But my aim is to live happily without regard to these things. Notwithstanding all this, *my poetry does not improve; I think it is growing worse every week. If I could find in my heart to abandon it, I believe I should be the better for it.* But I am going to write over my tragedy in a fortnight. Though my own compositions please me less, those of higher hands delight me more than ever."—(7th Dec. 1791.)

He by no means abandoned it. On the contrary, between 1791 and 1796, inclusive, he exercised his faculty of verse very considerably. The largest

portion of the result has disappeared. But enough survives to attest his industry, and to enable us to appreciate his powers. There are some loose leaves and fragments of small poems, mostly on the usual subjects of love and scenery, and in the form of odes, sonnets, elegies, etc.; all serious, none personal or satirical. And besides these slight things, there is a completed poem on Dreaming, in blank verse, about 1800 lines long. The first page is dated Edinburgh, May 4, 1791, the last Edinburgh, 25th June 1791; from which I presume that we are to hold it to have been all written in these fifty-three days—a fact which accounts for the absence of high poetry, though there be a number of poetical conceptions and flowing sentences. Then there is a translation into blank verse of the third book of the Argonauticon of Apollonius Rhodius. The other books are lost, but he translated the whole poem, extending to about six thousand lines. He says of this work to Mr. Morehead—(12th Dec. 1795)—"I have also written 600 lines, in a translation of the Argos of Apollonius, which I am attempting in the style of Cowper's Homer; and it is not much further below him than my original is under his." And I may mention here, though it happens to be in prose, that of two plays, one, a tragedy, survives. It has no title, but is complete in all its other parts. His estimate of its merits does certainly not savour of conceit. "Edinburgh, 13th February 1794.—The first sheet of this I brought with me from Oxford in July 1792, and I have completed it by writing two or three lines every two or three months since.

Upon the whole, it is exceedingly flat, slow, and uninteresting. My aim was to steer free of the pompous and sputtering magnificence of our rude tragedies, and into which I had some tendency to fall. This has been pretty well accomplished; but I have all the faults of the opposite extreme. Languid, affected, pedantic, the fable has no meaning, and the characters nothing characteristic. There is too little action throughout, and the whole piece is but a succession of conversations. Yet the simplicity of diction, as well as of soul, which I have endeavoured to exhibit, prevent these defects from being very disgusting, and make it rather drowsy than abominable." He was fond of parodying the Odes of Horace, with applications to modern incidents and people, and did it very successfully. The *Otium Divos* was long remembered. Notwithstanding this perseverance, and a decided poetical ambition, he was never without misgivings as to his success. I have been informed that he once went so far as to leave a poem with a bookseller, to be published, and fled to the country; and that, finding some obstacle had occurred, he returned, recovered the manuscript, rejoicing that he had been saved, and never renewed so perilous an experiment.

There may be some who would like to see these compositions, or specimens of them, both on their own account, and that the friends of the many poets his criticism has offended might have an opportunity of retaliation, and of showing, by the critic's own productions, how little, in their opinion, he was worthy to sit in judgment on others. But I cannot

indulge them. Since Jeffrey, though fond of playing with verses privately, never delivered himself up to the public as the author of any, I cannot think that it would be right in any one else to exhibit him in this capacity. I may acknowledge, however, that, so far as I can judge, the publication of such of his poetical attempts as remain, though it might show his industry and ambition, would not give him the poetical wreath, and of course would not raise his reputation. Not that there are not tons of worse verse published, and bought, and even read, every year, but that their publication would not elevate Jeffrey. His poetry is less poetical than his prose. Viewed as mere literary practice, it is rather respectable. It evinces a general acquaintance, and a strong sympathy, with moral emotion, great command of language, correct taste, and a copious possession of the poetical common-places, both of words and of sentiment. But all this may be without good poetry.

One of the poetical qualities—a taste for the beauties and the sublimities of nature—he certainly possessed in an eminent degree. His eye, which had a general activity of observation, was peculiarly attracted by these objects; and this not for the mere exercise of watching striking appearances, but for the enjoyment of the feelings with which they were connected. The contemplation of the glories of the external world was one of his habitual delights. All men pretend to enjoy scenery, and most men do enjoy it, though many of them only passively; but with Jeffrey it was indispensable for

happiness, if not for existence. He lived in it. The earth, the waters, and especially the sky, supplied him in their aspects with inexhaustible materials of positive luxury, on which he feasted to an extent which those who only knew him superficially could not suspect. Next to the pleasures of duty and the heart, it was the great enjoyment.

Commencement of his Professional Career.

On the 16th of December 1794 he was admitted to practise at the bar.

No idea can be formed of the prospects which this privilege opened, or of the good which he ultimately did, without knowing something of the political state of Scotland when he thus came into public life.

Everything was inflamed by the first French Revolution. Even in England all ordinary faction was absorbed by the two parties—of those who thought that that terrible example, by showing the dangers of wrongs too long maintained, was the strongest reason for the timely correction of our own defects,—and of those who considered this opinion as a revolutionary device, and held that the atrocities in France were conclusive against our exciting sympathetic hopes, by any admission that curable defect existed. It would have been comfortable if these had been merely argumentative views, upon a fair subject of amicable discussion. But they were personal as well as political feelings, and separated

people into fierce hostile factions, each of which thought that there was no safety for the state, or for itself, without the destruction of the other. Never, since our own Revolution, was there a period when public life was so exasperated by hatred, or the charities of private life were so soured by political aversion.

If this was the condition of England, with its larger population, its free institutions, its diffused wealth, and its old habits of public discussion, a few facts will account for the condition of Scotland.

There was then in this country no popular representation, no emancipated burghs, no effective rival of the Established Church, no independent press, no free public meetings, and no better trial by jury, even in political cases (except high treason), than what was consistent with the circumstances that the jurors were not sent into court under any impartial rule, and that, when in court, those who were to try the case were named by the presiding judge. The Scotch representatives were only forty-five, of whom thirty were elected for counties, and fifteen for towns. Both from its price and its nature (being enveloped in feudal and technical absurdities), the elective franchise in counties, where alone it existed, was far above the reach of the whole lower, and of a great majority of the middle, and of many even of the higher, ranks. There were probably not above 1500 or 2000 county electors in all Scotland; a body not too large to be held, hope included, in Government's hand. The return, therefore, of a single opposition member was never to be expected. A large estate

might have no vote; and there were hundreds of votes, which, except nominally, implied no true estate. The return of three or four was miraculous, and these startling exceptions were always the result of local accidents. Of the fifteen town members Edinburgh returned one. The other fourteen were produced by clusters of four or five unconnected burghs electing each one delegate, and these four or five delegates electing the representative. Whatever this system may have been originally, it had grown, in reference to the people, into as complete a mockery as if it had been invented for their degradation. The people had nothing to do with it. It was all managed by town councils, of never more than thirty-three members, and every town council was self-elected, and, consequently, perpetuated its own interests. The election of either the town or the county member was a matter of such utter indifference to the people that they often only knew of it by the ringing of a bell, or by seeing it mentioned next day in a newspaper; for the farce was generally performed in an apartment from which, if convenient, the public could be excluded, and never in the open air. The Secession Church had not then risen into much importance. There were few Protestant Dissenters. Even the Episcopalians were scarcely perceptible. Practically, Papists were unknown. During a few crazy weeks there had been two or three wretched newspapers, as vulgar, stupid, and rash, as if they had been set up in order to make the freedom of the press disgusting; and, with these momentary exceptions, Scotland did not maintain a single opposition

newspaper, or magazine, or periodical publication.* The nomination of the jury by the presiding judge was controlled by no check whatever, provided his lordship avoided minors, the deaf, lunatics, and others absolutely incapable. Peremptory challenge was unknown. Meetings of the adherents of Government for party purposes, and for such things as victories and charities, were common enough. But, with ample materials for opposition meetings, they were in total disuse. I doubt if there was one held in Edinburgh between the year 1795 and the year 1820. Attendance was understood to be fatal. The very Banks were overawed, and conferred their favours with a very different hand to the adherents of the two parties. Those who remember the year 1810 can scarcely have forgotten the political spite that assailed the rise of the Commercial Bank, because it proposed, by knowing no distinction of party in its mercantile dealings, to liberate the public, but especially the citizens of Edinburgh. Thus, politically, Scotland was dead. It was not unlike a village at a great man's gate. Without a single free institution or habit, opposition was rebellion, submission probable success. There were many with whom horror of French principles, to the extent to which it was carried, was a party pretext. But there were also many with whom it was a sincere feeling, and who, in their fright, saw in every Whig a person who was already a republi-

* The Scotsman, which was our first respectable opposition newspaper, and which for thirty-five years has done so much for the popular cause, not merely by talent, spirit, and consistency, but by independent moderation, only arose in 1817.

can, and not unwilling to become a regicide. In these circumstances, zeal, upon the right side, was at a high premium, while there was no virtue so hated as moderation.

HENRY DUNDAS, FIRST VISCOUNT MELVILLE.

If there had been any hope of ministerial change, or even any relief by variety of ministerial organs, the completeness of the Scotch subjugation might have been less. But the whole country was managed by the indisputed and sagacious energy of a single native who knew the circumstances, and the wants, and the proper bait, of every countryman worth being attended too. Henry Dundas, the first Viscount Melville, was the Pharos of Scotland. Who steered upon him was safe; who disregarded his light was wrecked. It was to his nod that every man owed what he had got, and looked for what he wished. Always at the head of some great department of the public service, and with the indirect command of places in every other department; and the establishment of Scotland, instead of being pruned, multiplying; the judges, the sheriffs, the clergy, the professors, the town councillors, the members of parliament, and of every public board, including all the officers of the revenue and shoals of commissions in the military, the naval, and the Indian service, were all the breath of his nostril. This despotism was greatly strengthened by the personal character and manners of the man. Handsome, gentlemanlike, frank, cheerful, and social, he was a favourite with most

men, and with all women. Too much a man of the world not to live well with his opponents when they would let him, and, totally incapable of personal harshness or unkindness, it was not unnatural that his official favours should be confined to his own innumerable and insatiable partisans. With such means, so dispensed, no wonder that the monarchy was absolute. But no human omnipotence could be exercised with a smaller amount of just offence. It is not fair to hold him responsible for the insolence of all his followers. The miserable condition of our political institutions and habits made this country a noble field for a patriotic statesman, who had been allowed to improve it. But this being then impossible, for neither the government nor a majority of the people wished for it, there was no way of managing except by patronage. Its magistrates and representatives, and its other base and paltry materials, had to be kept in order by places; for which they did what they were bidden; and this was really all the government that the country then admitted of. Whoever had been the autocrat, his business consisted in laying forty-five Scotch members at the feet of the government. To be at the head of such a system was a tempting and corrupting position for a weak, a selfish, or a tyrannical, man. But it enabled a man with a head and a temper like Dundas's, to be absolute, without making his subjects fancy that they ought to be offended. Very few men could have administered it without being hated. He was not merely worshipped by his many personal friends,

and by the numerous idolaters whom the idol fed, but was respected by the reasonable of his opponents; who, though doomed to suffer by his power, liked the individual; against whom they had nothing to say, except that he was not on their side, and reserved his patronage for his supporters. They knew that, though ruling by a rigid exclusion of all unfriends who were too proud to be purchased, or too honest to be converted, he had no vindictive desire to persecute or to crush. He was the very man for Scotland at that time, and is a Scotchman of whom his country may be proud. Skilful in parliament, wise and liberal in council, and with an almost unrivalled power of administration, the usual reproach of his Scotch management is removed by the two facts, that he did not make the bad elements he had to work with, and that he did not abuse them; which last is the greatest praise that his situation admits of.

In addition to common political hostility, this state of things produced great personal bitterness. The insolence, or at least the confidence, of secure power on the one side, and the indignation of bad usage on the other, put the weaker party, and seemed to justify it, under a tacit proscription. It both excluded those of one class from all public trust, which is not uncommon, and obstructed their attempts to raise themselves any how. To an extent now scarcely credible, and curious to think of, it closed the doors and the hearts of friends against friends. There was no place where it operated so severely as at the bar. Clients and agents shrink from counsel on whom judges frown. Those who

had already established themselves, and had evinced irresistible powers, kept their hold; but the unestablished and the ordinary had little chance. Everywhere, but especially at the bar, a youth of a Tory family who was discovered to have imbibed the Whig poison, was considered as a lost son.

These facts enable us to appreciate the virtuous courage of those who really sought for the truth, and, having found it, as they thought, openly espoused it. But they were not without encouragement. Though externally the people were crushed, the spirit, always kindled by injury, was not extinguished. The shires, with only a few individual exceptions, were soulless. But, in all towns, there were some thinking, independent men. Trade and manufactures were rising—the municipal population was increasing—the French Revolution, with its excitement and discussion of principles, was awakening many minds. The great question of burgh reform, demonstrably clear in itself, but then denounced as revolutionary, had begun that deep and just feeling of discontent, which operated so beneficially on the public spirit of the citizens all over Scotland for the next forty years. The people were silent from prudence. A first conviction of simple sedition by a judge-named jury was followed by transportation for fourteen years. They therefore left their principles to the defence of the leading Whigs; who, without any special commission, had the moral authority that belongs to honesty and fearlessness. These were chiefly lawyers; whose powers and habits connected them with public

affairs;—a bold and united band, without whose steadiness the very idea of independence would, for the day, have been extinguished in Scotland.

They had a few, but only a few, eternal supporters; but these bore powerful names. It was only the strong who durst appear. In spirit, Mr. James Gibson (afterwards Sir James Craig), was in the Society of Writers to the Signet, our second legal body, what Henry Erskine was in the Faculty of Advocates, our first. The Rev. Sir Harry Moncreiff stood out in the Church; John Allen and John Thomson in the medical profession; Dugald Stewart and John Playfair in the college. It was chiefly, however, by their reputations, and the influence of their known opinions, that these and others promoted the cause; because, Mr. Gibson excepted, they did not engage in the daily schemes and struggles of the party. Several other places had their independent men, who dared to show their heads. But the prevailing impression was fear; particularly on the part of those whose livelihood depended on the countenance of the upper ranks, and not on their own powers. But this worked for good ultimately. The necessity of suppressing their opinions increased the attachment with which these opinions were secretly clung to, and cherished an intensity of public principle which easier times do not require, and therefore, except in very thinking minds, rarely attain. The fruit appeared in due time.

In so far as Scotland was concerned, there could be no doubt of the policy of this party, and little ground for despair. The sole object was to bring

Scotland within the action of the constitution. For this purpose it was plain that certain definite and glaring peculiarities must be removed, and the people be trained to the orderly exercise of public rights; and, for the promotion of these ends, all sound principles of liberty, to whatever region applicable, must be explained and upheld. The imperfections of the old Scotch system were too gross to allow any one, who had a due confidence in the force of truth, to doubt their ultimate correction. And thus, instead of any vague generality of reform, the attention of our reformers were concentrated on certain black spots. Those in power shut their eyes and their ears to all such matters; and, cheered by a great majority of injudicious friends, did not perceive that below their triumphant surface, there was setting in that steady under-current, which, to the increased safety of the community, has swept these abominations away. That the flag was kept flying, was owing almost entirely to the spirit of the Whig lawyers.

The merit of these men can only be measured by the fact, that the state of affairs made a long sway for the government party, and consequently, a long exclusion of their opponents from all appointments, nearly certain; so certain, that no barrister could espouse Whiggism without making up his mind to renounce all hope of official promotion. If the Whigs had been as steadily in power, it would probably have been the same with the Tories; but this does not lessen the admiration due to those, no matter on what side, who sacrificed

their interests to their principles. It was fortunate for the Whig counsel, especially the juniors, that the advantage of the proscription fell to them. It made them feel that they had nothing but themselves to rely upon; while their opponents felt exactly the reverse. The latter were seduced to signalise themselves by party violence, and to rely on its official pay;—the former, seeing themselves debarred from all that patronage could confer, were compelled to seek those better things over which it has no control. They found these in leisure and study, in elevation of character, and in the habit of self dependence. They have since reaped their distant, and seemingly hopeless, harvest; not so much in their own rise, as in that rise of public opinion which their conduct did so much to produce. But they had a long and severe winter to pass through; and they, almost alone of the liberal, had courage to stand out through its darkest days.

It is very difficult to resist naming and describing some of these men and their measures. But this cannot be converted from a personal into a general, or even a local history; and, therefore, those not so intimately connected with Jeffrey as to have affected his life, must be passed over. As to himself, his public opinions, or rather their principles, were coeval with the growth of his reason. His private writings show that they were not formed without study and reflection, and his purity in adopting them may be inferred from their all being against his immediate interest. Nothing beyond his conviction of their soundness is necessary in order

to account for his adoption of them. If accidental circumstances co-operated, they probably consisted in the attraction of free principles to such a mind; in his abhorrence of the prevailing local persecution, and in the gloomy intolerance of his Tory father, contrasted with the open-hearted liberality of his Whig uncle of Herbertshire.

Scotch Law Courts.

The legal profession in Scotland had every recommendation to a person resolved, or compelled, to remain in this country. It had not the large fields open to the practitioner in England, nor the practicable seat in the House of Commons, nor the lofty political and judicial eminences, nor the great fortunes. But it was not a less honourable or a less intellectual line. It is the highest profession that the country knows; its emoluments and prizes are not inadequate to the wants and habits of the upper classes; it has always been adorned by men of ability and learning, who are honoured by the greatest public confidence. The law itself is not much upheld by the dim mysteries which are said elsewhere to be necessary in order to save law from vulgar familiarity. With a little deduction on account of the feudality that naturally adheres to real property, it is perhaps the best and the simplest legal system in Europe. It is deeply founded in practical reason, —aided by that conjoined equity which is equity to the world as well as to lawyers. There can be no more striking testimony to its excellence than the fact, that most of the modern improve-

ments in English law, on matters already settled in the law of Scotland, have amounted, in substance, to the unacknowledged introduction of the Scotch system. Its higher practice has always been combined with literature, which, indeed, is the hereditary fashion of the profession. Its cultivation is encouraged by the best and most accessible library in this country, which belongs to the bar. In joining this body, Jeffrey raised a far slighter obstacle to his favourite pursuits than if he had chosen almost any other line.

The mere "*Outer House*" presented everything calculated to prepare him for any other destination towards which he might have turned. This Outer House is a large, handsome, historical chamber, in immediate connection with the Courts,—the Westminster Hall of Scotland. It is filled, while the courts are sitting, by counsel, and all manner of men of the law, by the public, and by strangers, to whom the chief attraction is the contemplation of the learned crowd moving around them. For about two centuries this place has been the resort and the nursery of a greater variety of talent than any other place in the northern portion of our Island. It has seen a larger number of distinguished men—it has been the scene of more discussed public principles, and projected public movements—it has cherished more friendships. When Jeffrey sat on its remoter benches, and paced its then uneven floor, so did Scott, and Cranstoun, and Thomas Thomson, and Horner, and Brougham, and Moncreiff, and many others who have since risen into eminence. These

young men had before them the figures and the reputations of Blair, and Erskine, and Charles Hope,* and Clerk, and other seniors, on whom they then looked with envy and despair. But they had the library, and each other, and every enjoyment that society, and hope, and study, or gay idleness, could confer. In those days, as ever since, the intercourse of the lawyers was very agreeable. They were, and are, a well-conditioned, joyous, and, when not perverted by politics, a brotherly community; without the slightest tinge of professional jealousy; and so true to their principles, whatever they may be, that there have not been above two or three known political renegades among them during the last fifty years. May the young man walking the boards of that hall, in the opening of his legal career, be inspired by the recollection of the eminent persons who, throughout so many generations, have successively been in his position, and in his obscurity, and ever keep himself right by remembering what is due to the genius of the place.

We had no civil juries then, which cut off one great field of forensic display. But this was made up for, to a certain extent, by the supreme Court, consisting of no fewer than fifteen judges, who formed a sort of judicial jury, and were dealt with as such. But the pen was at that time, and for a long while afterwards, a more used instrument than

* Head of the Criminal Court in 1804; his merit in elevating and humanising which can only be judged of by those who recollect the condition to which it had been sunk by his two predecessors, Braxfield and Eskgrove.

the tongue. It was more inglorious, but it did more work. The great mass of the business was carried on by writing—not merely by written *pleadings*, but by the whole circumstances and legal merits of every cause being laid before the judges in the form of written or of printed statement and argument. Occasionally, when the learning in a cause is nice and profound, the deliberation and accuracy of written discussion has its advantages. But, intolerably, this form was then applied to everything. And this down till 1825. Justice could often afford to be deaf, but never to be blind. What generations of dumb, but able and learned drudges the custom bred! All counsel, even the speaking ones, were often obliged to practise it; but there were whole tribes of silent and laborious men who did nothing else. Many of them produced a quarto volume every day. They actually fed themselves, and married, and reared families, and left successions, upon it. This was always the first avenue of the juniors; whose considerate toil often crammed their ungrateful seniors with the matter out of which the seniors' lips extracted all the applause. Jeffrey's power of writing made this an easy line for him, and many an admirable contribution did he furnish in it.

His talents and his reputation, which among young men was very considerable, were his only grounds of hope in his first public scene. These were counteracted by his public opinions, and by an unpopularity of manner which it is somewhat difficult to explain. People did not like his Eng-

lish, nor his style of smart sarcastic disputation, nor his loquacity, nor what they supposed to be an air of affectation. These peculiarities gradually faded, and people got accustomed to them; but they operated against him throughout several of his early years. He himself was aware of this, and felt it. He writes to his brother (27th June 1796) of "*the few to whom I am dear;*" and envies John, who had gained so many friends, and seen so much of the world, "while I have been languishing within my island limits, scarcely known to anybody, and *not much liked by those who do know me.*"

It seems to be necessary that there should be a story about the first fee of every lawyer who rises high. Jeffrey's is, that returning home one day with a guinea, he cast it to his grandmother, saying, "There is my first fee, Granny; give it to your old woman at Leith."

But he was not much troubled with fees then. He always got a few from his father's connections; enough to show what he was; but there he stuck, and it was just as well.

There were at this time several able men on the bench, and at the bar, of whom it is very tempting to try to give some account. But this would be improper in a narrative which aims at merely explaining Jeffrey; and, therefore, I mention those persons only who affected his life, and not those, however eminent or singular, with whom he had only a casual or professional connection. I adhere to the principle with regret, because some of these persons merit preservation on account of their emi-

nence; and some, grown in the preceding century, were too picturesque to have their like ever seen again.

For a long while his professional acquaintance was exceedingly slight, scarcely extending beyond those friends of his youth who had gone to the bar with him. Of the seniors, there seem to have been only two who noticed him; with both of whom he lived in great friendship till death removed them.

Archibald Fletcher.

One of these was the late Mr. Archibald Fletcher, who died at a very advanced age in the year 1828. He was only a few years younger than Jeffrey at the bar, but was much older in life. It is, perhaps, unnecessary for me to say anything of this most excellent man, because his merits have been described, with his usual discrimination and force, by Lord Brougham (Speeches). A pure and firm patriot, neither the excitement of the French Revolution, nor the long and seemingly hopeless slumber that followed it, nor the danger to which every marked friend of the popular cause was then exposed, had any effect in altering his course of calm resolute benevolence. Throughout all the changes that occurred in his long life, he was the same, ever maintaining right opinions,—never neglecting any opportunity of resisting oppression, in whatever quarter of the globe it might be practised or threatened, ashamed of no romance of public virtue —always ready to lead, but, from modesty, much readier to follow, his Whig party in every conflict of principle,—and all with perfect candour and

immovable moderation. His more peculiar home subject was the reform of our burghs, a matter, however, that implied many of our other constitutional liberations. He was almost the father, and was certainly the most persevering champion, of this cause. But, indeed, his whole life, devoted as it was to the promotion of every scheme calculated to diffuse knowledge and to advance liberty in every region of the world, was applied with especial zeal and steadiness to the elevation of his native country. In all his patriotism he was encouraged by his amiable and high-minded wife; of whom Lord Brougham says, most justly, that, "with the utmost purity of life that can dignify and enhance female charms, she combined the inflexible principles and deep political feeling of a Hutchinson and a Roland." He was a sound lawyer, and in very respectable practice. It was a great pleasure to Jeffrey to discuss questions of political benevolence with him, even in the extremity of his age; sometimes taking the wrong side in order to excite him, and always delighted with the undecaying spirit of the honest and liberal old man.

Henry Erskine.

The other was the Honourable Henry Erskine, who had long been the brightest luminary at our bar. His name can no sooner be mentioned than it suggests ideas of wit, with which, in many memories, the recollection of him is chiefly associated. A tall and rather slender figure, a face sparkling with vivacity, a clear sweet voice, and a general suffusion of elegance, gave him a striking and pleasing ap-

pearance. He was nearly the same in private as in public; the presence of only a few friends never diminishing his animation, nor that of the largest audience his naturalness. No boisterousness ever vulgarised, no effort ever encumbered, his aerial gaiety. Though imposing no restraint upon himself, but always yielding freely to the radiant spirit within him, his humour was rendered delightful by its gentleness and safety. Too good-natured for sarcasm, when he was compelled to expose, there was such an obvious absence of all desire to give pain, that the very person against whom his laughing darts were directed generally thought the wounds compensated by the mirth and by the humanity of the cuts. Yet those will form a very erroneous conception of him who shall suppose that the mere display of wit was his principal object. In society, of course, his pleasure was to please his friends. But in public he scarcely ever uttered a joke merely for the sake of the laugh. He was far above this seducing vulgarity. His playfulness was always an argumentative instrument. He reasoned in wit; and untempted by the bad taste and the weakness of desiring to prolong it for its own sake, it ceased the very instant that the reasoning was served. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the fascination it threw around him, he had better have been without the power. It allured him into a sphere below that to which his better faculties would have raised him, and established obstructing associations of cheerfulness, whenever he appeared, in the public mind. For he was intuitively quick in apprehension, and not merely

a skilful, but a sound reasoner;—most sagacious in judgment; and his speaking had all the charms that these qualities, united to a copious but impressive language, and to a manner of the most polished and high-born gracefulness, could confer. Hence, though naturally, perhaps, his intellect was rather rapid and acute than deep or forcible, he could discharge himself of all his lightness when necessary, and could lead an audience, in the true tone, and with assured success, through a grave or distressing discussion.

In his profession he was the very foremost. There were some, particularly Blair, afterwards the head of the court, who surpassed him in deep and exact legal knowledge. But no rival approached him in the variety, extent, or brilliancy of his general practice. Others were skilled in one department, or in one court. But wherever there was a litigant, civil, criminal, fiscal, or ecclesiastic, there there was a desire for Harry Erskine;—despair if he was lost,—confidence if he was secured. And this state of universal requisition had lasted so long, that it could only have proceeded from the public conviction of his general superiority. He had been Lord Advocate during the coalition administration, but not long enough to enlarge his public views; and when Jeffrey was first honoured by his notice, his brethren had, for eight successive years, chosen him for their Dean, or official head. His political opinions were those of the Whigs; but a conspicuous and inflexible adherence to their creed was combined with so much personal gentleness, that it scarcely impaired his popularity. Even the old judges, in spite of their

abhorrence of his party, smiled upon him; and the eyes of such juries as we then had, in the management of which he was agreeably despotic, brightened as he entered. He was the only one of the marked Edinburgh Whigs who was not received coldly in the private society of their opponents. Nothing was so sour as not to be sweetened by the glance, the voice, the gaiety, the beauty, of Henry Erskine. He and his illustrious brother Lord Erskine, have sometimes been compared. There is every reason for believing that, in genius, Thomas was the superior creature. But no comparison of two men so differently placed is of any value. It is scarcely possible even to conjecture what each might have been in the other's situation. All that is certain is, that each was admirable in his own sphere. Cast as his lot was, our Erskine shone in it to the utmost; and it is no deduction from his merits that no permanent public victories, and little of the greatness that achieves them, are connected with his name. He deserves our reverence for every virtue and every talent that could be reared in his position; by private worth and unsullied public honour,—by delightful temper, safe vivacity, and unmatched professional splendour.

Yet, on the 12th of January 1796, this man was deprived of his deanship on account of his political principles; or at least, in consequence of his having acted upon them to the extent of presiding at a public meeting to petition against the war. This dismissal was perfectly natural at a time when all intemperance was natural. But it was the Faculty of Advocates alone that suffered. Erskine had long honoured his

brethren by his character and reputation, and certainly he lost nothing by being removed from the official chair. It is to the honour of the society, however, that out of 161 who voted, there were 38 who stood true to justice, even in the midst of such a scene. Jeffrey was not one of the thirty-eight. There were three or four young men who agreed with Erskine, and who adhered prominently to the policy of his party ever afterwards, but who felt constrained not to shock the prejudices of relations, and therefore stayed away. Jeffrey was one of these. He respected the feelings of his father, and of his first patron Lord Glenlee. He never repented of the filial deference, but most bitterly did he ever afterwards lament its necessity. He envied the thirty-eight, and always thought less of himself from his not having been one of them. It made the greater impression upon him that this was the first public occasion on which he had had an opportunity of acting on his principles.

Neither these matters, nor any other distraction, withdrew Jeffrey from his literary exercises. One of the two surviving books of the Argonauticon is dated Edinburgh, 12th December 1795, and the other, Edinburgh, 4th July 1796. And there is a letter to him from Dr. Maton, dated Salisbury, 13th September 1796, from which it appears that he had a serious desire for some immediate publication. The book is not named; but it may be inferred from the Doctor's words that it was a classical translation. "As matters are, I might as well tell you at once that these great men, the booksellers, were not more

sanguine about the good reception, or, I should rather say, the good incubation and sale of a work like yours, than they were about mine, when I had an idea of making it merely for the naturalists. Your favourite author seldom falls into the hands of any but professed amateurs of the classics, who are comparatively few at present, and one of the Bibliopoles told me that there was a *decent* translation already by—I know not by whom. As I was only a week, or a little more, in London, I could not take the charge of a part of your manuscript for their perusal. Why should you not try the consequence of publishing a part only? I mean to see how it would sell. Of its obtaining a good name from the critics, I would not for a moment entertain a doubt." No part of it ever appeared however.

His eldest sister, Mary, was married on the 21st of April 1797, to the late Mr. George Napier, writer to the signet, Edinburgh.

His condition and feelings about this period, and for a few years later, transpire in some passages of his letters to his brother and Morehead.

"When I wrote you last I was in the distraction of passing my last public trials, and in the course of a fortnight afterwards, I had accomplished the whole ceremony, and was regularly admitted to the bar. The Christmas vacation put a stop to my splendid career, within a few days after it had begun; so that I have the course in a manner to renew, and the awkwardness of a first appearance to experience for a second time. The causes in which a young lawyer is engaged are, as you probably know,

for the most part of very little consequence; and the style of pleading at the outer bar* such as may be attained without much knowledge, eloquence, or presence of mind. It is literally a burst of wrangling and contradicting; in which the loudest speaker has the greatest chance to prevail. I did not feel myself very expert in this trade, but perceive that I shall be able to acquire les manières of it without much difficulty."—(To his brother, 3d January 1795.)

"I have been considering very seriously since I came last here the probability of my success at the bar, and have but little comfort in the prospect; for all the employment which I have has come entirely through my father, or those with whom I am otherwise connected. I have also been trying to consider of some other occupation in which I might put my time and application to better profit; but find the prospect still more perplexing and obscure. I am determined, however, that I will not linger away the years of my youth and activity in an unprofitable and hopeless hanging on about our courts, as I see not a few doing every day; for besides the waste of that time which can never be replaced, the mind becomes at once humiliated and enfeebled in such a situation, and loses all that energy which alone can lead it to enterprise and success."—(To his brother, 28th November 1795.)

"All great passions are born in solitude. They are tamed and degraded by the common intercourse of society; but in public companies, in crowds, and

* One of the Bars in the Outer House, where a single judge sits.

assemblies, they are quite lost and extinguished; and so by degrees I come back to seriousness and sense. I wish I could make you as happy as your letter made me, and in the same way—I mean by as prosperous an account of my affairs; but the truth is not so bad as to be concealed. I have been here almost ever since the date of my last, lingering away my mornings in the court with less edification, less profit, and less patience, I think, than when you were here. My evenings, too, have not made up for the waste of time so well as they did last winter, for though not so dissipated as you, I have been very much out for the last month. However I weary of this idle, turbulent, sort of amusement, and mean to withdraw myself into solitude for another month to balance my accounts. The only kind of work with which I have employed myself lately is in translating old Greek poetry, and copying the style of all our different poets; but the weightier matters of the law have been horribly neglected."—(27th January 1796.)

"The last session has passed away with very little increase of profit, reputation, or expectancy; and though almost as favourable as candidates of my standing usually find it, has left me with no longing for the approach of another, and little prospect of better ruminations at the close of it. I wish I could do something which would ensure me some kind of subsistence from my own exertions. But to be in the condition of one who is asking charity, willing and waiting to work, but idle from want of employment, is an evil attending all the professions called

liberal, and makes them unfortunately less independent than any other. The state of politics, too, in this country, and the excessive violence and avowed animosity of the parties in power, which have now extended to every department of life, and come to affect every profession, make the prospect still less encouraging to one who abhors intolerance, and is at no pains to conceal his contempt of its insolence."—(2d April 1796.)

"I am extremely hurried at present preparing for a criminal trial, in which I have been engaged very much against my inclination. The man for whom I attended last week was found guilty unanimously, and indeed there was no chance for him. As to my new clients,—it is probable I shall have nothing to do but to sit by them, and look wise."—(16th October 1796.)

This man was Roderick Milesius M'Cuillin; who, on the 13th of October 1797, was convicted of forgery. His case, which, from the commission of the crime down to his death on the scaffold, was throughout all its stages, accompanied by striking adventures, made a great noise at the time. It is impressed on my memory by the circumstance, that I happened to go into the gallery of the Court, and saw for the first time, Francis Jeffrey and George Joseph Bell, who were counsel for the prisoner, and Lord Braxfield, then the head of the criminal court. I understood nothing about such matters then, but I remember being much surprised at the style of the counsel, and at the vulgar overbearing coarseness of the judge.

"*I should like, therefore, to be the rival of Smith and Hume, and there are some moments (after I have been extravagantly praised, especially by those to whose censure I am more familiar), when I fancy it possible that I shall one day arrive at such a distinction.* But I could never convince myself that it was any part of my duty, or at all likely to increase the probability of this lofty distinction, for me to fix my hopes or my wishes upon it with an undeviating and unmovable firmness. I do not think we can *make* occasions always for the display of our abilities, and if we do not unfit ourselves for making use of them when they do come, I think the less we feel at their delay the happier we are at liberty to be."—(To Morehead, 15th January 1798.)

In another letter to Robert Morehead, of 6th August 1798, he announces an intended ramble through Cumberland and Wales, and laments that they are both getting too hard and sensible.—"What, my dear Bobby, are we turning into? I grow, it appears to myself, dismally stupid and inactive; I lose all my originalities, and ecstasies, and romances, and am far advanced already upon that dirty highway called the way of the world. I have a kind of unmeaning gaiety that is fatiguing and unsatisfactory even to myself; and in the brilliancy of this sarcastic humour, I can ridicule my former dispositions with admirable success. Yet I regret the loss of them much more feelingly, and really begin to suspect that the reason and gross common sense by which I now profess to estimate everything is just as much a vanity and delusion as any of the

fantasies it judges of. This, at least, I am sure of, that these poetic visions bestowed a much purer and more tranquil happiness than can be found in any of the tumultuous and pedantic triumphs that seem now within my reach, and that I was more amiable, and quite as respectable, before this change took place in my character. I shall never arrive at any eminence, either, in this new character, and have glimpses and retrospective snatches of my former self, so frequent and so lively, that I shall never be wholly estranged from it, nor more than half the thing I seem to be aiming at. Within these few days I have been more perfectly restored to my poesies and sentimentalities than I had been for many months before. I walk out every day alone, and as I wander by the sunny sea, or over the green and solitary rocks of Arthur's Seat, I feel as if I had escaped from the scenes of impertinence in which I had been compelled to act, and recollect, with some degree of my old enthusiasm, the wild walks and eager conversation we used to take together at Herbertshire about four years ago. I am still capable, I feel, of going back to these feelings, and would seek my happiness, I think, in their indulgence, if my circumstances would let me. As it is, I believe I shall go on sophisticating and perverting myself till I become absolutely good for nothing."

He wrote again after the journey had begun, from Wigton, 3d September 1798, saying he meant to take London on some part of his way. "I am going to be very literary in London, and have

thoughts of settling there as a grub. Will you go into partnership with me? I have introductions to review and newspaper editors, and I am almost certain that I could make four times the sum that ever I shall do at the bar. Your friends were all well when I heard of them. John is now asleep before me, and Dr. Brown as near him as possible." —"*P.S.*—I send you a most exquisite sonnet, with which I was inspired immediately upon my arrival, and which I wish you to circulate among your friends, as a production of the ingenious person whose name it bears. My reason for this is, that he may make his entree into Oxford with some of that eclat which it cannot fail to procure him," etc. etc.

His grub speculation got little encouragement. On the 20th of the same month he tells Mr. Geo. Bell, "I have derived but little benefit yet from my letters of introduction. Perry,* I can never find at home. Philips† sent me away without reading my letter, and most of the other eminent persons to whom I meant to present myself are enjoying their dignity in the country."

So much the better for him. He came home, and was gradually drawn by circumstances into the line of life which was the best for his powers, his usefulness, and his happiness.

"I have been idle and rather dissipated all this summer. Of late I had fits of discontent and self-condemnation pretty severely; but I doubt if this will produce anything for a long time to come. The thing, however, will certainly draw to a crisis in a

* Editor of the Morning Chronicle. † Bookseller.

year or two. My ambition, and my prudence, and indolence, will have a pitched battle, and I shall either devote myself to contention and toil, or lay myself quietly down in obscurity and mediocrity of attainment. I am not sure which of these will promote my happiness the most. I shall regret what I have forfeited, be my decision what it may. The unaspiring life, I believe, has the least positive wretchedness. I have often thought of going to India, but I do not know for what station I should be qualified, or could qualify myself, and I have almost as little talent for solicitation as you have." —(To Morehead, 6th July 1800.)

These seeming adversities, and this obvious ambition, always led him back to himself, and to the improvement of his own mind. He never gave up his studies, or had any real hope of success except from his deserving it. In none of his letters is there the slightest gleam of expectation from any patron.

He was fond of all science not depending on mathematics. Medicine in particular had great attractions for him, and for a short time he studied it. His friends John Allen, John Thomson, Charles Bell, and Thomas Brown, were all of that profession, and though they did not purposely encourage his propensity, their conversation produced a desultory acquaintance with their science. One way or other, he at least learned enough about it to make him generally a fanciful sufferer, and a speculative doctor when he himself was the patient. Chemistry he liked, and, in its large principles, understood respect-

ably. All his scientific tendencies were excited by his being a member of that singular society of the rising young men then in Edinburgh, called "The Academy of Physicks."* "I am become a zealous chemist, and would make experiments if I could afford it, and was not afraid of my eyes. I shall join a society in the winter, that conducts these things in a very respectable style. I am afraid it will swallow up our academy, for which I am sorry. It was the most select and the least burdensome thing of the kind I was ever concerned with. But amiable licentiousness, and want of discipline, has extinguished it, or nearly."—(To Morehead, 6th July 1800.) This general acquaintance with science was of great use to him in his profession. And though his science, as science, was neither deep nor accurate, it was sufficient to set him, in this respect, above the judges or the juries he might have to convince, or any brother he might have to oppose; nor, except Lord Brougham, was there any practising barrister, even in England, who in this particular was his match.

On the 2d of March 1800, he tells his brother, "I am beginning to grow discontented, and to feel emotions of despondency and ambition, that do no

* See a full account of it in Welch's Life of Brown. They acknowledged only three facts which were to be admitted without proof. 1. Mind exists. 2. Matter exists. 3. Every change indicates a cause. And even these concessions they reserved "the power of altering or modifying." Prof. Brown, John Leyden, Lord Webb Seymour, Mr. Reddie, Dr. Birkbeck, Brougham, Jeffrey, Horner, were members, and many others of note.

credit to my philosophy. It is impossible not to see that my profession does not afford me the means of subsistence, and that nine parts in ten of the little employment I have is derived from those with whom I am personally connected. If these persons were to die, or to quarrel with me, I should scarcely have an apology for attending the courts, and should make less by doing so than a common labourer Now this is not only mortifying, but a little alarming too, and prudence, as well as pride, exhorts me to look to something else. I have talents that my conscience will not let me rank in the lowest order, and I had industry enough too for most things, till the loitering habits of my nominal profession, and the peculiar state of my health, put an end to any regular exertion. I have associated, too, a good deal of late with men of high rank, prospects, and pretensions, and feel myself quite upon a level with them, in everything intrinsic and material. I cannot help looking upon a slow, obscure, and philosophical starvation at the Scotch bar as a destiny not to be submitted to. There are some moments when I think I could sell myself to the minister or to the Devil, in order to get above these necessities. At other times I think of undertaking pilgrimages and seeking adventures, to give a little interest and diversity to the dull life that seems to await me; and when I am most reasonable, I meditate upon the chances of my success at the English bar, or in India, to both of which resources I have been exhorted and recommended by some of my friends. What does your commercial, idle, epicurean head say to all this?"

22205

If these fits of depression or impatience had been serious, and had arisen merely from his not getting business, they would have been very unreasonable. He had only been five years at the law, and had got at least something to do, though not much; whereas he must have seen that many a better lawyer had been double that time without knowing what a fee was, and yet had risen to fortune and renown. But when men write about their own feelings to a distant friend, they are apt to get sentimental, and to describe emotions as habitual which are only suggested by the act of writing. This was the close too, of the winter session of the court, which, by reminding him how little he had done, naturally disposed him to pensiveness and complaint. Accordingly, he says in this very letter, "You must not think that these reflections are habitual with me. They come in fits, though, to say the truth, rather oftener than I could wish. This is the last week of our session." It was not his professional insignificance alone that troubled him, but its being combined with the consciousness of adequate ability, and the rise of very inferior rivals on the right side, who were flaming over his head like rockets. Notwithstanding all this, however, his prevailing state, as at every period of his life, when not in actual distress, was that of gaiety.

Accordingly, although his professional despondency lasted several years longer, his feeling of personal loneliness was now entirely removed. The Speculative Society, time, the bar, and his being better known, had led him into a wider society, and into

several valuable and permanent friendships. In particular, between 1797 and 1800, some conspicuous young men had come to Edinburgh, to whom, being strangers, the merits of Jeffrey were more apparent than they had hitherto been to many of those among whom he dwelt. Some of these have been already named in mentioning the Speculative Society, and it was to them that he refers in the preceding letter as "*men of high rank, prospects, and pretensions,*" with whom he had been associating, and to whom he felt himself equal "*in everything intrinsic and material.*" In addition to these were Lord Webb Seymour, Mr. Sydney Smith, and Mr. Hamilton, also strangers. The known admiration of these foreigners gave him importance in the sight of those who were disposed to slight him, and enlarged his experience of life. And his ordinary Edinburgh friendships now included Professor Playfair, Mr. Thomas Thomson, Mr. George Joseph Bell, and his brother Charles, Mr. James Graham, Mr. Brougham, Mr. John Macfarlan, Mr. John A. Murray, Mr. Horner, Mr. James Moncreiff, and Mr. John Richardson. His surviving friends cannot have forgotten his delight in the calm and amiable thoughtfulness of Playfair,—how he loved the gentle Seymour,—how he reverenced Horner,—how he enjoyed the wise wit of Smith.

GEORGE AND CHARLES BELL.

Of all these there was no one, except perhaps his cousin Robert Morehead, to whom he was attached so early as to the two Bells, or to whom he adhered through life with a more affectionate tenacity. Both reached

great distinction, one in the law, the other in art and physiology. George was long afterwards appointed by the unanimous election of his brethren to the Professorship of Law in the College of Edinburgh, and by the Crown to one of the principal clerkships in the Supreme Court. But his true distinction consists in his being the author of the Commentaries on the Law of Bankruptcy, an institutional work of the very highest excellence, which has guided the judicial deliberations of his own country for nearly fifty years, and has had its value acknowledged in the strongest terms by no less jurists than Story and Kent. With a stiff and sometimes a hard manner, he was warm-hearted and honourable, a true friend, and excellent in all the relations of life. No one ever knew him well without respect and regard. Charles is now known to the world as the author of a beautiful work, illustrated by his own exquisite drawings, on the anatomy of painting, and as the discoverer of the true structure and theory of our nervous system, a discovery which places him at the head of modern physiologists. Gentle and affectionate, he was strongly marked by the happy simplicity that often accompanies talent; and was deeply beloved by numerous friends. In affection the brothers were one. George's labour at his book used to excite Jeffrey's envy and self-contempt. "In the meantime, what are you doing? and how do the days run away from you? Do you know, since I have seen you engaged in that great work of yours, and witnessed the confinement and perspiration it has occasioned you, I have oftener considered you as an object of

envy and reproachful comparison than ever I did before. I am really a good for nothing fellow, I believe, and have no right to expect any better fortune in this world than I am likely to have. I have thought so oftener, I tell you, within these last two or three months than ever I did; and many a time when I have skipped down your stair with an air of exulting carelessness, I have wished myself hanged for a puppy, and you with me for putting me in mind of it. I have no leisure, however, to be moral at present, but as I do chew upon such reflections very perseveringly, something perhaps will one day come of it."

They were left early in life very poor, on the death of their father, a clergyman in the Scotch Episcopal Church. As soon as they were of an age to reflect, they saw that they had nothing to depend upon except their own industry; and, having selected their departments, they entered upon their cultivation with an energy characteristic of both. There are few things more touching than the high-minded resolution with which these two young men, cheered by each other, prosecuted the severe studies out of which they at last achieved their reward. There is a memorandum by George, in which, among other things, he mentions a walk that they took to Cults, twenty-two miles west of Edinburgh, where an aunt was living. Each had with him a part of what was afterwards converted into his first publication, on which, and on their uncertain prospects, they had much anxious talk. "I recollect we stopped to rest ourselves, and drank at a stream on the roadside.

and amused ourselves with thinking how pleasant it would be to remember this outset of life when we were advanced somewhat higher."

George appears to have been among the first at the bar to discover Jeffrey's superiority; and without the advice, remonstrances, and encouragement, of this steady and hard-working friend, it seems very possible that Jeffrey would not have persevered in his profession. Bell was always rating, and inspiring him with hope. Thus, in answer to an impatient letter from Jeffrey of the 7th of October 1796, Bell, among other things, tells him (9th October 1796)—"Upon your own exertion must depend, not your happiness alone—for perhaps you are too much of a philosopher to allow anything external to influence your happiness—but your capacities of indulging in whims, and your ability of assisting others. If so, you will conceive better of your profession than you seem to do." "With a strong, lively, and elegant imagination,—a cultivated taste,—a mind well stored with knowledge,—versant in the law at least equal to any of your years,—with ready conceptions, and quickness of reply, what in all the world should hinder you from attaining to the head of your profession? Let me hear no more of this murmuring and nonsense." "But, in faith, my dear fellow, if you feel really averse to this profession, and unable to bear its drudgery, you should at once resolve to make a man of yourself, and do honour to your family and your country, by some literary labour." Throughout all that part of the life of every barrister that must be precarious,

Bell was equally ready with encouraging sense, and never despaired of the final triumph of the friend it was given to. He alludes, in another memorandum without a date, but written some years after this, to M'Cuillin's case thus:—"On coming to town I was appointed to be counsel for a fine young fellow of an Irishman, charged with forgery. I made my friend Jeffrey my assistant. He was not then known. Few people but myself knew the extraordinary resources of that man's genius at the time. His manner was bad, and the misjudging world would allow him no merit or talent. The conquest he has made over the prejudices of the world, his own manner, and every man who has come into competition with him, none but talents of the first rank could have accomplished."

JAMES GRAHAME.

Besides Bell there were other two very early friends, both of the same class, over whose memories it is grateful to linger.

James Grahame, author of The Sabbath, British Georgics, The Birds of Scotland, and other Poems, who died on the 14th September 1811, was one of them. Tall, solemn, large-featured, and very dark, he was not unlike one of the independent preachers of the Commonwealth. He is styled "sepulchral Grahame" by Byron. Neither the bar, at which he practised a few years, nor Whig principles, in the promotion of which he was most ardent (but which with him meant only the general principles of liberty), were the right vocation of a pensive nature,

whose delight was in religion and poetry. The decline of his health deepening his piety, and increasing his dislike of his profession, he entered the English Church in 1808, and obtained a humble curacy, with which, however, he was perfectly contented. With the softest of human hearts, his indignation knew no bounds when it was roused by what he held to be oppression, especially of animals or the poor, both of whom he took under his special protection. He and a beggar seemed always to be old friends. The merit of his verse consists in its expressing the feelings of his own heart. It all breathes a quiet, musing benevolence, and a sympathy with the happiness of every living creature. Contention, whether at the bar or in the church, had no charms for one to whom a Scotch tune was a pleasure for a winter evening, and who could pass whole summer days in cultivating the personal acquaintance of birds in their own haunts, and to whom nothing was a luxury that excluded the ethereal calm of indolence. Yet his virtue was by no means passive. He was roused into a new nature by abhorrence of cruelty, and could submit to anything in the cause of duty. Professor Wilson published some lines on his death, which owe their charm, which is great, to their truly expressing the gentle kindness and simple piety of his departed friend. I do not know whether he or Jeffrey delighted most in each other. With Richardson the three passed many a happy evening in their early years. What did any of them find better in life than one of their many humble suppers, with Jeffrey's talk and Grahame's pathetic or Jacobite songs, and Richardson's flute?

JOHN MACFARLAN.

John Macfarlan, afterwards of Kirkton, was also an advocate; never in great, but generally in very respectable practice. In piety, calmness, and Whiggism, he was the same with his friend Grahame; from whom he only differed in being more practical, in spite of a taste for German and Metaphysics. His life was extended till the 18th of December 1846, when he died at the age of eighty, his last twenty years having been passed in the country. He was one of Jeffrey's steady friends; one of those friends with whom friendship can subsist, and warmly, without the aid of constant intercourse. For in their walks they were a good deal different, Macfarlan being serious, studious, and retired. He had his own associates, and shrank from no publicity where he could do good, but cared little for general society. What Jeffrey, and all who knew him, liked him for, was, his kindliness of heart, his honesty, his intelligence, his singular simplicity, and his political firmness. It need not be told that he and Grahame were two of the thirty-eight. He was one of the few (at least they are fewer than they should be) who could combine the deepest personal religion with absolute toleration, and the boldest patronage of the people with the steadiest repression of their extravagance. He never published except in his old age, when he put out a few occasional sheets against prevailing follies, written with almost apostolic shortness and fervour. His words were as plain as Swift's; his thoughts, within

his range, as liberal as Fenelon's. In 1834 I sent one of his little pamphlets against strikes and unions to Jeffrey, who answered, "John Macfarlan's printed letter to the (calico) printers is admirable. I have sent it to the Chancellor and Lord Grey. He is a man to be proud of."—(18th February 1834.)

In February 1799, Jeffrey wrote "An Analysis, etc., of the general remarks on the customs and manners of the native inhabitants of New South Wales, annexed to the account of that colony, by David Collins, Esq. London, 4to, 1798." The style of this paper shows that it was meant for publication, probably in the Monthly Review, to which he was then an occasional contributor. It seems to be an examination of the first part of Collins' work, of which the second volume was afterwards discussed in the Edinburgh Review (vol. ii. p. 30). The analysis is excellent.

His reading, or part of it, during 1800, is attested by a bound volume of 150 very closely written quarto pages, beginning in January and ending in December. It contains short critical discussions of forty-eight books which he had been studying, almost all of them on the most important and difficult subjects. He was at the pains to make a regular alphabetical index to the volume; a thing unexampled with him, and which could only be done from his idea of the value of the notes and speculations it contains. It is full of talent, and with, I suspect, considerable originality.

During this summer (1800) he also attended a

course of chemical lectures by Dr. Hope, of which there remain five volumes of notes.

On the 7th of June 1800, his youngest sister was married to Dr. Brown, now of Lanfine. This was a union from which he drew much happiness throughout his whole subsequent life. He greatly loved his sister, and was cordially attached to her excellent husband, who was steadily rising to the eminence he afterwards attained as the first physician in Glasgow, and always dignified his practice by the cultivation of other sciences. No alliance could have been happier for all parties.

During the autumn of this year, he and his friend Sanscrit Hamilton planned an expedition to Germany. "We propose to make a philosophical tour into the southern parts of the empire, observing men, women, and minerals, and journeying with the simple economy of the sages and apostles of old." But it was soon found that even this apostolic pilgrimage would require a hundred guineas, and "I have not twenty in the world."—(To John, 17th June 1800.)

Mrs. Brown's removal left his father and him alone. It was impossible that this could last long. Accordingly, before the first two months were out, he was obviously thinking of a home for himself, with a companion of his own choosing. "For my part, I have been doing nothing for this last month with all my might, and with all my soul. Indeed, I have been enjoying my idleness so diligently, that I have scarcely had resolution to encounter the fatigues of going from home. I had myself trans-

ported indeed by water to St. Andrews, where I bathed, and lounged, and fell in love with great assiduity. The love indeed sticks by me still, and I shall go back, I believe, and let it have its course." —(To John, 3d August 1800.)

The German tour shrunk into a Highland one, which I suppose exhausted the twenty guineas, and this revived an old scheme. "I have been so long exhorted by all my friends to write a book, that I have a great notion that I shall attempt something of that kind in the course of the winter. I have not been able to fix upon any subject yet though, and I am afraid a man is not very likely to make a good figure who writes, not because he has something to say, but who casts about for something to say, because he is determined to write. A law book would probably be of the greatest service to me, but I have neither science, nor patience enough, I suspect, to acquire it."—(To John, 1st October 1800.)

The book never appeared; and he was again disturbed by the old fancies about England and India. "I have thought, too, of engaging myself in the study of Oriental literature, and making myself considerable in that way, and of fifty different schemes of literary eminence at home." But he adds—"Within this while, however, I will confess to you, these ambitious fancies have lost a good deal of their power over my imagination, and I have accustomed myself to the contemplation of a humble and more serene sort of felicity. To tell you all in two words, I have serious thoughts of marriage, which I should be forced to abandon if I were to adopt almost any

of the plans I have hinted at. The poor girl, however, has no more fortune than I, and it would be madness nearly to exchange our empty hands under the present aspect of the constellations."—(To John, 3d January 1801.)

MARRIAGE.

The lady whose affections he had thus the happiness to engage was Catherine, one of the daughters of the Reverend Dr. Wilson, Professor of Church History at St. Andrews, a second cousin of his own.

In March this year (1801) there was a vacancy in the historical chair in the University of Edinburgh, by the resignation of Alexander Fraser Tytler, Esq., who had occupied it for several years with credit to himself and to the College. The office was in the gift of the Faculty of Advocates. Some of Jeffrey's friends advised him to take it, if he could get it; and he himself was by no means averse. His subsequent career renders it certain that he would have made it a splendid course. But if he had applied, it does not admit of a doubt that party spirit would have rejected him. And there were other and wiser friends who were against his undertaking anything that tended to withdraw him from his profession. The tortures of uncertainty were not allowed to be long endured, either by intending candidates or by the electors. The father resigned on the 11th of March, and his son was appointed on the 18th of that month.

The marriage took place on the 1st November

1801. It had all the recommendations of poverty. His father, who was in humble circumstances, assisted them a very little; but Miss Wilson had no fortune, and Jeffrey had told his brother, only six months before, that "*my profession has never yet brought me* £100 *a year.* Yet have I determined to venture upon this new state. It shows a reliance on Providence scarcely to be equalled in this degenerate age, and indicates such resolutions of economy as would terrify any less magnanimous adventurer." His brother having asked him to describe his wife, he did so, as I think, who came to know her well, with great accuracy. "You ask me to describe my Catherine to you; but I have no talent for description, and put but little faith in full-drawn characters; besides, the original is now so much a part of myself, that it would not be decent to enlarge very much either upon her excellences or her imperfections. It is proper, however, to tell you, in sober earnest, that she is not a showy or remarkable girl, either in person or character. She has good sense, good manners, good temper, and good hands, and above all, I am perfectly sure, that she has a good heart, and that it is mine without reluctance or division." She soon secured the respect and esteem of all his friends, and made her house, and its society, very agreeable.

Their first home was in Buccleuch Place, one of the new parts of the old town; not in either the eighth or the ninth storeys, neither of which ever existed, but in the third storey, of what is now No. 18 of the Street. His domestic arrangements were

set about with that honourable economy which always enabled him to practise great generosity. There is a sheet of paper containing an inventory, in his own writing, of every article of furniture that he went the length of getting, with the prices. His own study was only made comfortable at the cost of £7 : 18s.; the banqueting hall rose to £13 : 8s., and the drawing-room actually amounted to £22 : 19s.

During part of next winter (1800 and 1801), he attended the second course of Lectures delivered by Dugald Stewart on Political Economy, of which he has left five small volumes of notes. It was there that I first got acquainted with him. I had seen him before in the Court, and had both seen and heard him in the Speculative Society, and must have occasionally spoken to him. But it was at this class that I began to know him. Our ways home were the same, and we always walked together. I remember being struck with his manner, and delighted by his vivacity and kindness. From that time we were never for a moment estranged.

In May 1802 he took up his second abode in the upper storey of what is now, as it was then, No. 62 Queen Street. It brought him nearer his friends, and gave him a beautiful prospect.

His first professional speech that I remember was made that month in the General Assembly. It was in a cause which, however important to the parties and the church courts, was in itself paltry. But it made a little noise in its hour, chiefly from Jeffrey's appearance in it. "My professional em-

ployment is increasing, too, a little, I think, and I rather believe that my reputation as a man of business stands somewhat higher than it used to do. I have made a speech in the General Assembly about six weeks ago that has done me some good, I believe. The speech seemed to me at the time to be very middling, and certainly cost me no exertion whatsoever; but I find it spoken of in many quarters, and have received congratulations from my friends as if it was to make me very advantageously known."—(To John, 26th June 1802.)

There were no regular reporters of the decisions of the court at this period, except two advocates, who held the performance of that task as an office, to which they were elected by their brethren. They were paid by a small salary, which arose from the sale of the annual volume. It was always conferred on juniors; and as, by an absurd deference of the reporters, and an incomprehensible aversion on the bench, the opinions of the judges were scarcely ever given, it was neither so difficult nor so important a task as it has since become. In summer of 1801 both collectorships were vacant. Jeffrey presented himself to his brethren as a candidate for one of them, and had the honour of being proposed by Henry Erskine. But upon the 10th of July he was rejected by a large majority. His two opponents were younger than he, and, however excellent and fit for the place, certainly had not his reputation. But qualification had little to do with the matter. It was made a mere party question.

LORD GLENLEE.

The election was connected with one painful occurrence, which distressed him for many years. There was some business relation between his father and Sir William Miller, Bart., who was a judge, and known, from his estate's name, as Lord Glenlee. This had led his Lordship to notice Frank Jeffrey while very young, and, seeing his talents, to have him a good deal about him. But as the youth grew up, and his political principles began to disclose themselves, his Lordship's taste for him did not increase, and their intercourse became less frequent. Glenlee had no vote in the election, but it was thought that he might have some influence, and as there was no avowed rupture, Jeffrey asked him to exert it on his behalf. But his Lordship took this occasion to tell him plainly that, in consequence of his politics, he could befriend him no more. They parted, and scarcely exchanged words for nearly thirty years.* Jeffrey was Lord Advocate before he

* After the above page had been printed, I received a copy of the following letter written by Lord Jeffrey to his wife in 1826, which shows that Lord Glenlee's reconciliation to him took place a few years sooner than I had supposed.

"I have a pressing invitation from Lord Glenlee this morning to pass a few days with him at Barskimming—the first invitation, or act of common civility, that I have received from him since he chose to quarrel with me about politics, the year I came to the bar. If I can contrive it, I should like to go, both because it is infinitely delightful to me to see old friendships restored, and because I have a curiosity to learn what this new turn portends."

was allowed to renew the old acquaintance. He did so then, and with great pleasure; for throughout this long alienation he had never uttered one word about his early patron but in respect and gratitude. So far as I know, this was the solitary eclipse by which any friendship of Jeffrey's was ever obscured.

He regretted it the more from his great admiration of Glenlee, who was a very able, and a very singular man. After a short course of early travel and an abortive attempt in parliament, he settled at the bar, and devoted the rest of his long life entirely to study. He was made a judge when still young, and after so little practice that he had to learn his law on the bench. Talent and industry, however, soon placed him high among profound and learned lawyers. But though deep in legal knowledge, and most ingenious in its application, law was not the highest of his spheres. His favourite and most successful pursuit was mathematics; on which John Playfair, a very competent judge, used to say that he had original speculations, which, if given to the world, would have raised him to an eminent place among the best modern contributors to that science. Next to this was his classical learning, which gradually extended to a general, but pretty accurate acquaintance with the languages and literature of France, Spain, and Italy, and, in his extreme old age, of Germany. There is not much that could be added to the attainments of a man who was great in mathematics, literature, and jurisprudence.

His conversation, as described by the two or three

friends who were his world, was full of thought and of curious original views; and it was this that chiefly attracted Jeffrey. A lover of knowledge for its own sake, and with a memory tenacious of the substance of truth, he not only systematically augmented his learning, but continued the improvement even of his faculties, when far beyond the period of life at which the mental powers begin, or are generally permitted, to decline. Jeffrey visited him at his country seat in August 1842, when he was eighty-seven, and wrote to a friend that "he is very deaf, and walks feebly, but his mind is as entire and vigorous as ever. When I came in he was in the middle of a great new treatise on the properties of the Ellipse, which he had just got from Germany." His public feelings were miserably narrow. Indeed, on political matters his mind never made any progress, except perhaps in being easier under its illiberality since he withdrew into his learned cell. Too fastidious and too comfortable for publication, he neither gave nor (so far as it appears) left anything to the world. And thus he has gone, without rearing any memorial to himself, except the inadequate one that is furnished by the law reports; and even in giving judicial opinions, depth, brevity, and an odd delivery, made his excellences less perceptible than those of far inferior men.

His appearance was striking, and very expressive of his intellect and habits. The figure was slender; the countenance pale, but with a full dark eye; the features regular, unless when disturbed, as his whole frame often was, by little jerks and gesticulations,

as if he was under frequent galvanism; his air and manner polite. Everything indicated the philosophical and abstracted gentleman. And another thing which added to his peculiarity was, that he never used an English word when a Scotch one could be got. He died in 1846, in his ninety-first year.

Whatever this rejection proved to the party from which it proceeded, it was to Jeffrey personally a most fortunate occurrence. It has been supposed that if he had been allowed to waste himself in the obscure labour of reporting, the Edinburgh Review might never have been heard of. There is little probability in this opinion; but undoubtedly a very slight measure of professional employment would have prevented him from having much connection with it. This exclusion increased his despair of success in the law, and co-operated with his literary ambition, in leading him into the scheme and management of that great work, with which his name is now permanently associated, which for the next twenty-seven years became the principal business of his life.

The Edinburgh Review.

Mr. Smith's account of the origin of the Edinburgh Review is this:—"One day we happened to meet in the eighth or ninth storey or flat, in Buccleuch Place, the elevated residence of the then Mr. Jeffrey. I proposed that we should set up a Review; this was acceded to with acclamation. I was appointed editor, and remained long enough in Edinburgh to edit the first number of the Edinburgh Review."—(Preface to Sydney Smith's Works.)

The merit of having first suggested the work is undoubtedly due to Mr. Smith. He himself claims it in the preceding words, and to those acquainted with his character, this is sufficient. But Jeffrey admits it. His "*Contributions*" are dedicated to Mr. Smith, expressly as "*The Original Projector of the Edinburgh Review.*" And no other person has ever come forward to dispute the fact. Whatever credit, therefore, attaches to the first announced idea of the undertaking, it belongs to Mr. Smith. But his statement might make it appear that the resolution to begin it was sudden and accidental, and as if it had occurred and been acted upon at once at that casual meeting. But probably all that is meant is, that it was then that the matter was brought to a practical conclusion. Because it is difficult to believe that such an undertaking could have been determined upon on the suggestion of a moment, and without previous calculation and arrangement. Accordingly, Jeffrey never ascribed more to this meeting than that it was there that they had their "*first serious consultations about it.*" It happened to be a tempestuous evening, and I have heard him say that they had some merriment at the greater storm they were about to raise. There were circumstances that tended so directly towards the production of some such work, that it seems now as if its appearance, in Edinburgh, and about this time, might almost have been foreseen. Of these it is sufficient to mention the irrepressible passion for discussion which succeeded the fall of old systems on the French Revolution; the strong feeling of resentment at our own

party intolerance; the obviousness that it was only through the press that this intolerance could be abated, or our policy reformed; the dotage of all the existing journals;' and the presence, in this place, of the able young men, who have been mentioned, most of them in close alliance, and to whom concealed authorship was an irresistible vent.

The most important of these were Jeffrey, Smith, Brougham, and Horner. Very few of them contemplated letters or politics as the business of their lives, but they were all eager for distinction, and for the dissemination of what they, in their various walks, thought important truth; and they were then all masters of their own time.* A review combined all the recommendations that could tempt such persons into print. Of all the forms of addressing the public, it is the one which presents the strongest allurements to those who long for the honours, without the hazards, of authorship. It invites every variety of intellect; it does not chain its contributors to long courses of labour; it binds no one to do more than he pleases; it shrouds each in the anonymous mystery which each is so apt to derive a second gratification by removing; it exalts each into an invisible chair of public censorship, and pleases his self-importance or his love of safety, by showing him, unseen, the effect of his periodical lightning. A publication that subsists by successions of temporary excitement is

* Their youth, though it was one of the established grounds of the pretended contempt of their opponents, was by no means excessive. Allen, in 1802, was thirty-two; Smith, thirty-one; Jeffrey, thirty; Brown, twenty-four; Horner, twenty-four; Brougham, twenty-three. Excellent ages for such work.

not always favourable to habits of patient inquiry, or accurate and temperate statement. But this is only when it falls into rash or unconscientious hands. Honesty and prudence have often produced as dispassionate and well-considered discussions in reviews as any that could be slowly elaborated by a responsible name in an acknowledged volume. But, at any rate, how strong were the seductions of brilliancy, ridicule, or severity, to a knot of friends, whose pleasure in the exercise of their powers was not likely to be checked either by reflecting on its effects upon themselves, or by too much sympathy with the victims of their critical vigour!

If the rest who first planned this work had been left to their own inexperience, they would probably have been at a loss how to proceed. But they plainly leant upon Jeffrey, who had not merely been engaged in the study of criticism all his life, but had reduced his study to practice. He had already got several papers published in the existing journals. Some of them, though not specified, are alluded to in his letters, but (so far as I know) only three of them can be authenticated. Two of them are on Whiter's Etymologicon Magnum, which were published in June and July 1802, in the Monthly Review. He describes these in a letter to his brother (1st August 1802) as "*too elaborate, but quite sound in argument.*" The third was a discussion of Thalaba, which he sent to that journal before the Edinburgh Review was resolved upon, though by some accident it was not published there till November, which was subsequent to the appearance of his article on Thalaba

in the "Edinburgh." His having written these papers was known to his friends, who, though he was not at first their formal editor, leant mainly on his experience and wisdom.

And the field was open to their conquest. There had been no critical journal in Scotland since the days of the original "*Edinburgh Review*," the first number of which was published in January 1755, and the second and last in January 1756.*

There were reviews in England; but, though respectable according to the notions at that time of critical respectability, they merely languished in decent feebleness. Indeed, the circumstance of their almost restricting themselves to the examination of books, exclusively of public measures and principles, narrowed the range of their criticism, and congealed its spirit.

It was intended to have published the first

* This first Edinburgh Review contains a slight article by Adam Smith on Johnson's Dictionary, and an excellent letter, ascribed to Smith, on the inexpediency of confining the Journal to Scotch publications. The conductors, in that innocent age of reviewing, profess to be guided by principles which must please some of those gentle spirits who used to be shocked by what they deemed the virulence of the new Edinburgh Journal. "They are to judge with candour, but with freedom. Opinions they are only to relate, *not to combat.*" "*Immoralities they would rather chuse to bury in oblivion.*" "*They expect no praise to themselves,* for a work in which to be useful is their only design," etc. It will gratify the modern reviewer to learn that their very first number contains this specimen of their tenderness:—"We are almost ashamed to say we have read this pamphlet. 'Tis such a low scurrilous libel, that even the most necessitous printer or publisher must be at a loss for finding a decent excuse for publishing it."

number in June 1802, but it was put off for some months. During this pause Jeffrey's expectations of its success, if a few passages in his letters can be relied on, were not high. "Our Review has been postponed till September, and I am afraid will not go on with much spirit even then. Perhaps we have omitted the tide that was in our favour. We are bound for a year to the booksellers, and shall drag through that, I suppose, for our own indemnification."—(To Mr. Morehead, 24th May 1802.)

"Our review is still at a stand. However, I have completely abandoned the idea of taking any permanent share in it, and shall probably desert after fulfilling my engagements, which only extend to a certain contribution for the first four numbers. I suspect that the work itself will not have a much longer life. I believe we shall come out in October, and have no sort of doubt of making a respectable appearance, though we may not perhaps either obtain popularity, or deserve it."—(To John, 26th June 1802.)

Nobody who knew Jeffrey well would have expected him to augur favourably of it, because favourable augury was rather rare with him. He calls himself "a Pessimist." It is difficult to understand how this could be the habit of so cheerful a temperament, and so sound a judgment. Were it possible to suspect so sincere a person of making preparations against the imputation of foolish confidence by systematic professions of fear, it might be suspected that distrust of futurity was a defensive principle of his. But he was far too candid for any

such scheme. He really believed that most grand projects fail; and therefore, having little sympathy with the sanguine, he had a pleasure in refuting their demonstrations, and provoked himself into doubt by the exercise of assailing their infallibilities. But whatever the explanation may be, the fact is, that in his calculations of human contingencies he was generally in a state of lively argumentative despair. There was no cloud over the spirits. It was merely a taste that he had for extracting grounds, out of existing circumstances, for predicting failure rather than success:—"For my own part, I am much inclined to despair still, though I cannot help confessing that I am as gay and foolish through the twenty-four hours as I used to be."—(To Horner, 23d July 1803.) "I look enough at the bright side of things;—I mean habitually, and referably to my own little concerns;—so much so that it is really an effort for me to look at anything else. But it is an effort which I start every now and then to think how I can decline so completely and *theoretically*. I am very much in a state of despair, while I have scarcely any actual anxiety."—(To Malthus, 1st April 1811.)

At last, on the 10th of October 1802, the first number of the Edinburgh Review appeared. Besides several other articles, it contained seven by Smith, four by Horner, four commonly ascribed to Lord Brougham, and five by Jeffrey, one of which upon Mounier on the influence of the French Revolution, began the work.

The effect was electrical. And instead of ex-

piring, as many wished, in their first effort, the force of the shock was increased on each subsequent discharge. It is impossible for those who did not live at the time, and in the heart of the scene, to feel, or almost to understand, the impression made by the new luminary, or the anxieties with which its motions were observed. It was an entire and instant change of everything that the public had been accustomed to in that sort of composition. The old periodical opiates were extinguished at once. The learning of the new Journal, its talent, its spirit, its writing, its independence, were all new; and the surprise was increased by a work so full of public life springing up, suddenly, in a remote part of the kingdom. Different classes soon settled into their different views of it. Its literature, its political economy, and its pure science, were generally admired. Many thoughtful men, indifferent to party, but anxious for the progress of the human mind, and alarmed lest war and political confusion should restore a new course of dark ages, were cheered by the unexpected appearance of what seemed likely to prove a great depository for the contributions of able men to the cause of philosophy. Its political opinions made it be received by one party with demonstrations of its iniquity, with confident prophecies of the impossibility of so scandalous a publication lasting, much pretended derision, and boundless abuse of its audacious authors. On the opposite side, it was hailed as the dawn of a brighter day. It was not merely the intelligent championship of their principles that those on that

side saw apparently secured, but the far higher end, that reason would be heard. The splendid career of the Journal, as it was actually run, was not anticipated, either by its authors or by its most ardent admirers; none of whom could foresee its long endurance, or the extent to which the mighty improvements that have reformed our opinions and institutions, and enabled us to engraft the wisdom of experience on the maintainable antiquities of our system, were to depend on this single publication. They only saw the present establishment of an organ of the highest order, for the able and fearless discussion of every matter worthy of being inquired into; but they could not then discern its consequences.

Nowhere was its pillar of fire watched with greater intensity than in Scotland, where the constitutional wilderness was the darkest. Many years had to pass before it could effect actual reform; but it became clearer every day that a generation was forming by which the seed sowing by this work must at last be reaped. To Edinburgh in particular it was of especial benefit. It extended the literary reputation of the place, and connected it with public affairs, and made its opinions important. All were the better for a journal to which every one with an object of due importance had access, which it was in vain either to bully or to despise, and of the fame of which even its reasonable haters were inwardly proud.

It was distinguished in its outset from similar publications by its being kept quite independent of

booksellers, and by the high prices soon paid for articles. The first kept its managers free; the second gave them the command of nearly all the talent in the market. Yet for the first two or three numbers they had an idea that such a work could be carried on without remunerating the writers at all. It was to be all gentlemen, and no pay. And it was during this state of matters that Jeffrey doubted its success, and meant to have a very short connection with it. But this blunder was soon corrected by a magnificent recurrence to the rule of common sense. Mr. Constable, who was their publisher, though unfortunate in the end, was the most spirited bookseller that had ever appeared in Scotland. Yet even he seems at one time to have been doubtful of the permanent success of the work, for Mr. Smith gave him the following advice, in a letter which is not dated, but must have been written within the first year of the Review's existence:—

"Sir, You ask me for my opinion about the continuation of the E. Review. I have the greatest confidence in giving it you, as I find every body here (who is capable of forming an opinion upon the subject) unanimous in the idea of its success, and in the hope of its continuation. It is notorious that all the reviews are the organs either of party or of booksellers. I have no manner of doubt that an *able, intrepid,* and *independent* review would be as useful to the public as it would be profitable to those who are engaged in it. If you will give £200 per annum to your editor, and ten guineas a sheet, you will soon have the best review in Europe. This

town, I am convinced, is preferable to all others for such an undertaking, from the abundance of literary men it contains, and from the freedom which at this distance they can exercise towards the wits of the south. The gentlemen who first engaged in this review will find it too laborious for pleasure; as labour, I am sure they will not meddle with it for a less valuable offer.—I remain, Sir, your obedt. humble sert." etc.

"*P.S.*—I do not, by the expressions I have used above, mean to throw any censure on the trade for undertaking reviews. Every one for himself; God for all. It is fair enough that a bookseller should guide the public to his own shop. And fair enough that a critic should tell the public they are going astray."

The sagacious Horner recorded his opinion at the time of the credit which this publication would do Jeffrey, by the following entry in his private journal: —"Jeffrey is the person who will derive most honour from this publication, as his articles in this number are generally known, and are incomparably the best. I have received the greater pleasure from this circumstance, because the genius of that little man has remained almost unknown to all but his most intimate acquaintances. His manner is not at first pleasing; what is worse, it is of that cast which almost irresistibly impresses upon strangers the idea of levity and superficial talents. Yet there is not any man whose real character is so much the reverse. He has, indeed, a very sportive and playful fancy, but it is accompanied with an extensive and varied information, with a readiness of apprehension almost

intuitive, with judicious and calm discernment, with a profound and penetrating understanding." A character drawn with great truth, and a prediction amply confirmed.

Many accounts have been given of the organisation by which the work was launched and piloted; but they are all superseded by the following explanation, written by Jeffrey in November 1846, in answer to a question put for Mr. Robert Chambers, to whom and to his brother William, the public, and especially the poor, have been so deeply indebted for those judicious and cheap publications which have so long instructed and tended to elevate the people:* —"I cannot say exactly where the project of the Edinburgh Review was first *talked of* among the projectors; but the first serious consultations about it, and which led to our application to a publisher, were held in a small house, where I then lived, in *Buccleuch Place*. (I forget the number.) They were attended by Sydney Smith, F. Horner, Dr. Thomas Brown, Lord Murray, and some of them also by Lord Webb Seymour, Dr. John Thomson, and Thomas Thomson. The first three numbers were *given* to the publisher—he taking the risk and defraying the charges. There was then no individual editor; but as many of us as could be got to attend, used to meet in a dingy room off Willison's printing office, in Craig's Close, where the *proofs* of our own articles were read over and remarked upon, and attempts made also to sit in judgment on the few manuscripts

* This Paper has been more than once published before now.

which were then afforded by strangers. But we had seldom patience to go through with these, and it was found necessary to have a responsible editor, and the office was pressed upon me. About the same time, Constable was told that he must allow ten guineas a sheet to the contributors, to which he at once assented; and not long after, the *minimum* was raised to sixteen guineas, at which it remained during my reign, though two-thirds of the articles were paid much higher—averaging, I should think, from twenty to twenty-five guineas a sheet on the whole number. I had, I might say, an unlimited discretion in this respect, and must do the publishers the justice to say that they never made the slightest objection. Indeed, as we all knew that they had (for a long time at least) a very great profit, they probably felt that they were at our mercy. Smith was by far the most timid of the confederacy, and believed that unless our *incognito* was strictly maintained, we could not go on a day. And this was his object for making us hold our dark divans at Willison's office, to which he insisted on our repairing singly, and by back approaches, or by different lanes!! He also had so strong an impression of————'s indiscretion and rashness, that he would not let him be a member of our association, though wished for by all the rest. He was admitted, however, after the third number, and did more work for us than anybody. Brown took offence at some alteration Smith had made in a trifling article of his in the second number, and finally left us, thus early —publishing at the same time in a magazine the

fact of his secession, a step which we all deeply regretted, and thought scarcely justified by the provocation. Nothing of the kind occurred ever after."

In saying that "*there was no individual editor*," he does not mean to throw the slightest doubt on Mr. Smith's statement (p. 120) that he (Smith) edited the first number—but only that though Mr. Smith did so actually, it was not done in the capacity of an official editor, formally appointed.

In the midst of the excitement and applause of this work, he was saddened by the prospect of soon losing the society of some of the more eminent friends with whom he had embarked in it. "I foresee the likelihood of our being all scattered before another year shall be over, and of course the impossibility of going on, on the footing upon which we have begun. Indeed few things have given me more vexation of late than the prospect of the dissolution of that very pleasant and animated society in which I have spent so much of my time for the last four years; and I am really inclined to be very sad when I look forward to the time when I shall be deserted by all the friends and companions who possessed much of my confidence and esteem. You are translated into England already. Horner goes to the English bar in a year. S. Smith leaves this country for ever, about the same time. Hamilton spends his life abroad as soon as his father's death sets him at liberty. Brougham will most probably push into public life even before a similar event gives him a favourable opportunity. Reddie is lost, and absolutely swallowed up, in law. Lord Webb leaves

this before winter. Jo. Allan goes abroad with Lord Holland immediately. Adam is gone already, and, except Brown and John Murray, I do not think that one of the associates with whom I have speculated and amused myself, will be left with me in the course of eighteen months. It is not easy to form new intimacies, and I know enough of the people among whom I must look for them, to be positive that they will never be worthy of their predecessors. Comfort me then, my dear Bobby, in this real affliction."—(To Morehead, 24th May 1802.)

It was a real affliction indeed. But it arose chiefly from his naturally thinking less of the old friends who were to remain, than of those more recent ones he was about to lose; and from the impossibility of his then being aware of the happiness of the life that awaited him with other friends whom he gradually acquired.

Of the ten persons mentioned in these communications, only four are now alive, viz.—Lord Brougham, Mr. Reddie, Mr. Thomas Thomson, and Lord Murray.* Of these it would be indecorous to speak, in their own presence, as I would desire. Of a person so eminent as Lord Brougham, indeed, it would be even absurd to say anything in so unworthy a record as this. Of the other three, I shall merely say enough to identify them. Mr. James Reddie was at this time a very rising lawyer; who has only been excluded from such honours as belong to the learning of the profession, by his settling early in Glasgow as the legal adviser of the municipal corporation. Mr.

* [All of these have since died (1872).]

Murray, who, thirty-two years after this, succeeded Jeffrey in the office of Lord Advocate, is now a judge. Jeffrey had a very warm affection for him; and the friendship continued unbroken to the last. He was in the same position with relation to Mr. Thomson, the most learned and judicious antiquary in Scotland. No one has done nearly so much to recover, to arrange, to explain, and to preserve, our historical muniments. He found them almost a chaos, and, after bringing them into order, has left them on a system of which the value will be felt the more every day that they accumulate. His real merit, great as it may seem now, will seem still greater five hundred years hence. He is at present one of the principal clerks in the Supreme Court. Had he not allowed his taste for antiquarian research to allure him from the common drudgery of his profession, he would have stood high in practice, as he always did in character, at the bar; and would now have been adorning the bench by his considerate wisdom and peculiar learning.

The celebrity of those who are gone makes it unnecessary for me to attempt to describe them. Mr. Smith is known by his works; Mr. Allen by his writings, and by Lord Brougham's account of him;* Mr. Horner by his Memoirs; Mr. Brown by his Lectures, and his Life by Welsh; and Lord Webb Seymour, a brother of the Duke of Somerset, by the Biographical Notice of him by Mr. Hallam,† one of

* Historical Sketches.

† In the Appendix to the first volume of the Memoirs of Horner.

the best portraits of a character in writing that exists. He had come to Edinburgh in 1797, and resided there till his lamented death in 1819. Horner and Playfair were his particular friends, and all of that calm cast were so congenial to his truth-seeking mind, that we used sometimes to admire his good nature in tolerating the levity of Jeffrey. But Seymour loved him sincerely, and this in spite of his serene spirit being often troubled by onsets on his most cherished doctrines, and even by laughter at his grand philosophical designs. But a warm mutual affection bound them together. Never was a stranger more universally beloved in a city than Seymour was. The very people on the streets reverenced the thoughtful air and countenance of the English nobleman who honoured the place by making it his home.

Mr. Hamilton was a Scotchman, who had been in India; a little, amiable person, of excellent conversation, and great knowledge of Oriental literature. He was afterwards professor of Sanscrit in the East India College at Haileybury.

Dr. John Thomson was of the medical profession. Beginning as a surgeon, he afterwards rose to extensive practice as a physician, and obtained the chair of Pathology in the College of Edinburgh. He was a man of learning and enthusiasm, and contributed several valuable papers to the earlier numbers of the Review. Jeffrey and he continued in habits of intimate friendship till Thomson's death, on the 11th of October 1846.

Jeffrey's anticipations of the loss of the leading persons in this society proved true. It soon began

to dissolve, and within three years from the date of his last letter had almost totally disappeared. The individual friendships survived; but, as an Edinburgh brotherhood, it had ceased. How fortunate it is that his own anchor was fixed in his native soil, and that he could not follow his friends into scenes which no one was fitter to shine in; but which, however fascinating to ambition, were not more favourable to happiness than the more peaceful ones to which he was moored. He himself soon came to think so. Writing to Horner (5th January 1804), he asks about Smith's prospects, and says, "I am afraid Edinburgh is out of his scheme of life now, at all events; though I console myself with believing that you have all committed a great mistake in leaving it, and that we have here capabilities of happiness, that will not so easily be found any where else."

There is little else to be told of this interesting band. They formed a distinct and marked sect, distinguished by their reputation, their Whiggism, and their strong mutual coherence. There were a few men of the opposite party, or rather of no party, by whom they were kindly received, such as Dr. James Gregory, the Rev. Archibald Alison, Mr. Henry Mackenzie, and Scott. But by the old Tories of the correct stamp they were disdained; and by the young ones, in whose imaginations their principles were only aggravated by their talents and their gaiety, they were viewed with genuine horror. This condensed them the more. In themselves they were all merry, even the thoughtful Horner. They were

all full of hope;' not one of them seeming ever to doubt that he would yet do something. They were all very industrious. But, hard students though they were, they were always ready for a saunter, or a discussion, and particularly for a hilarious supper. "I despair (writes Jeffrey to Allen, on the 21st January 1804) of finding any substitute for those quiet and confidential parties in which we used to mingle, and play the fool together." They all attained eminence in their respective paths; and none of them ever forgot those old Edinburgh days. Brown and John Thomson both left the Review from offence, in its infancy; but this never impaired the editor's regard, or that of his associates, for them. And it was towards Jeffrey that the group gravitated. Several of them surpassed him in individual qualities, but none in general power, and this was attested, in spite of occasional perturbations, by their all practically acknowledging him as their centre.

Although he happens to mention Brown and Murray as his only remaining associates, he only means those "with whom I have speculated and amused myself." He had many other valued friends left; and among others—the only person here who overshadowed his literary fame—Walter Scott. Everything that ever occurred between these two has been stated by Mr. Lockhart in his life of Sir Walter; and I have only to explain that, though always on excellent terms, their political opinions, and the one being the critic, and the other the criticised, interfered with their being on habits of daily

and confidential intimacy. Scott, in mentioning Jeffrey to Byron (16th July 1812), describes him as "my friend Jeffrey, for such, *in spite of many a feud, literary and political,* I always esteem him," which discloses the obstacles that their regard had to contend with. Even so late as 1827, in mentioning a party at Mr. Murray's, where he met Jeffrey and other Whig friends, he observes in his journal, "I do not know how it is, but when I am with a party of my opposition friends, the day is often merrier than with our own set;" and he accounts for this by saying, that "both parties meet with the feeling *of something like novelty.*" The fact that even to a person of Scott's joviality and frankness, a dinner together was a novelty, shows that their friendship, though solid, was not embodied in habitual intercourse.

Jeffrey had a son, born in September 1802; but he died on the 25th of October, after a few hours of gentle illness. The sudden extinction of this child made him nervous about all infantine maladies ever after.

There are few men whom the fame and the occupation of the Review would not have withdrawn from such obscure professional employment as had yet fallen, or seemed likely to fall, to his share. But with his usual prudence and energy, he struggled to counteract the injury which a known addiction to any other pursuit almost invariably does to that of the law, by additional attention to whatever its practice required. He was well aware of the precariousness of an income depending on authorship, and knew that literature was seldom more graceful than when

combined with something more solid, and particularly with eminence in a liberal profession, leading to public consequence and to high honours. In telling Horner (11th May 1803), who had left Edinburgh in the end of the preceding March, that he had agreed to become the regular editor, he says, "If I do that well, and am regular in my attendance, etc., perhaps the knowledge of my new occupation may not very materially impede my advancement. It will be known that my connection with the Review is not for life, and that I will renounce it as soon as I can do without it. The risk of sinking in the general estimation, and being considered as fairly articled to a trade that is not perhaps the most respectable, has staggered me more, I will acknowledge, than any other consideration. I certainly would not leave, or even degrade, my profession, by becoming the editor of any other journal in the kingdom; but I cannot help thinking that there are some peculiarities in our publication that should remove a part of these scruples."

Being informed that his brother was contemplating marriage, in America, he encouraged him by this account of his own conjugal condition. "After the experience of summer and winter, health and sickness, gaiety and sorrow, I can say, conscientiously, that marriage has been to me a source of inestimable happiness; and that I should be much inclined to measure a man's capacities of goodness by the effect it produces on him. The great good, certainly, is the securing one steady and affectionate friend, to whom all your concerns are important, whom nothing

can alienate or pervert, and with whom there can be no misapprehension, concealment, or neglect. This is the true basis upon which habit and recollection build a thousand secondary affections. To you I think marriage will be of unusual advantage; for your wandering and unsettled life made some *fixation* particularly necessary; and the light holds of casual friendship and idle acquaintances will be in danger of producing a cold and selfish impatience of stronger and narrower ties. As to your choice, I daresay it is excellent. Indeed a man of tolerable sense can hardly choose ill, if he do not choose in a fever of admiration. For most part of the endearment that makes the happiness of marriage comes after the romantic ardours have blazed out. Your Susan will not think this very complimentary, so I beg you would not tell her; but say, I am sure she is an angel, and that there is no angel I long so much to meet with. I am glad she is little, for the honour of our fraternity; and think, indeed, from your whole description, that she would suit me much better than the wife I have, who is constantly insulting me on my stature and my levity. Perhaps we may negotiate an exchange when we meet, after the fashion of the ancient Britons."

When Horner withdrew from Edinburgh, he left a legacy of his bar wig to Jeffrey, who tells him, after trying it about a fortnight—"Your wig attracts great admiration, and I hope in time it will attract great fees also. But in spite of the addition it makes to my honour and beauty, I must confess that the Parliament House appears duller and more

ridiculous this season than usual. Some of the last wearer's contempt, I suppose, still sticks to the cowl of the said wig, and oozes into my head. Now that the evenings are growing long, and the town empty, I often wish you were here to speculate with me upon Queen Street."—(26th May 1803.) The hairdresser who made one wig fit these two, ought to have been elevated to the deaconship of the craft; for nature never produced two heads less alike, either in form or bulk. The explanation, however, is that almost all wigs were the same to Jeffrey, for none ever fitted him. He and his wig were always on bad terms; and the result was that he very seldom wore one. Throughout nearly the whole of the last fifteen or twenty years of his practice, he was conspicuous, and nearly solitary, in his then black and bushy hair.

It was in 1803 that a private institution arose, upon which much of his social happiness, and that of many of his best friends depended for nearly forty years. He says to Horner (15th June 1803)—"I forgot to ask Murray if he has told you about our *club*. In two words, it is to be a weekly meeting of all the literary and social persons in the city; and we set out last Friday with sixteen. The idea was Walter Scott's. All his friends are included, and all ours. We have besides, John Playfair, Alex. Irving, H. Mackenzie, Sir James Hall, and, I believe, Alison. Our complement is to be thirty, and two black balls to exclude any candidate. I think it promises to unite the literature of the place more effectually and extensively than anything else. You shall be admitted as a visitor when you can

spare us a vacation visit." This refers to the Friday club—so called from the day on which it first used to meet. It was entirely of a literary and social character, and was open, without any practical limitation of numbers, to any person generally resident in Edinburgh, who was supposed to combine a taste for learning or science with agreeable manners, and especially with perfect safety. The following were all the members, with the years of their joining, who ever belonged to it. Those marked by an asterisk are the present survivors :—*

1803. Sir James Hall—Geology and Architecture, etc.
Dugald Stewart.
John Playfair.
Rev. Archd. Alison—Sermons, Essays on Taste.
Rev. Sydney Smith.
Rev. John Elmsley, Oxford.
Alex. Irving, afterwards Lord Newton, a Judge.
William Erskine, afterwards Lord Kinnedar, a Judge.
George Cranstoun, afterwards Lord Corehouse, a Judge.
Sir Walter Scott.
Francis Jeffrey.
Thomas Thomson, afterwards Clerk of Session—various Antiquarian Works.
Dr. John Thomson, Physician and Professor—Lectures on Inflammation, etc. etc.
John A. Murray, afterwards Lord Advocate, now Lord Murray.
Henry Brougham.
Henry Mackenzie—*The Man of Feeling*, etc.
Henry J. Mackenzie, Lord Mackenzie, a Judge.
Malcolm Laing, Historian.
* H. Cockburn, now Lord Cockburn, a Judge.
* John Richardson, Solicitor in London.

* [This applies to the year when the first edition was published. The only survivor now is Mr. Kennedy (1872).]

John Allen.
Francis Horner.
Thomas Campbell—*Pleasures of Hope*, etc. etc.
1804. Alex. Hamilton, Orientalist.
Andrew Coventry, Physician, and Professor of Agriculture.
John Robison, Professor of Natural Philosophy—*Life of Black*, etc. etc.
George Strickland, afterwards Sir George, M.P.
Andrew Dalzell, Professor of Greek.
Lord Webb Seymour.
Earl of Selkirk—Emigration, etc. etc.
Lord Glenbervie.
1807. Rev. John Thomson.
1810. John Jeffrey.
1811.*Thomas F. Kennedy, of Dunure, formerly M.P., Treasurer of Ireland, etc., now Commissioner of Woods and Forests.
* John Fullerton, afterwards Lord Fullerton, a Judge.
1812. George Wilson, retired English Lawyer.
1814. John Gordon, Physician.
1816.*Andrew Rutherfurd, since Lord Advocate, and now Lord Rutherfurd, a Judge.
1817. James Keay, of Snaigo, Advocate.
1825. Leonard Horner, late President of the Geological Society, London—*his brother's memoirs*, etc.
* James Pillans, Professor of Humanity.
1826.*Count M. de Flahaut.
David Cathcart, Lord Alloway, a Judge.
1827.*Earl of Minto, Lord Privy Seal.
*William Murray of Henderland.
1830. Mountstuart Elphinstone, India.
1833.*James Abercrombie, afterwards Speaker.

"It was announced at the last club that Lord Webb was to pass next winter in Edinburgh. I hope you will confirm this, and send him down fully convinced that, without being a member of the said club, it is impossible to have any tolerable existence

in Edinburgh."—(To Horner, 8th August 1803.) This was not exactly the fact, for there were many literary and excellent men who were never in it; but no one acquainted with this place can fail to perceive that these are distinguished Edinburgh names; perhaps the most so that have been united, and adhered so long, in any such association in our day. Admission as members was restricted to those living in Edinburgh; but strangers were very freely introduced as visitors. At first the club met weekly, and only to supper, a favourite refection in old Edinburgh, and one that, not only in 1803, but for many years thereafter, was cultivated as a necessary part of life, in a majority of rational houses. "Our club comes on admirably. We have got Dugald Stewart, the Man of Feeling, Sir James Hall, John Playfair, and four or five more of the senior literati, and we sit chatting every week, till two o'clock in the morning."—(To John, 30th July 1803.) However, though there be more cheerfulness, ease, and kindness at one supper than at a dozen of heavy dinners, still, like other excellent things, they have fallen under the fashionable ban, and will soon be unknown; for, though the two be sometimes compared, nothing is less like a supper than a late dinner. Even the Friday's weekly suppers came to be aided by a monthly banquet at six o'clock; and then the Roman meal disappeared as the principal repast. But the philosophers rarely parted without supper too. The dinner took place throughout seven months in the year, and parsimony was certainly not one of its vices. We were troubled by no written

laws, no motions, no disputes, no ballots, no fines, no business of any kind, except what was managed by one of ourselves as secretary; an office held by Mr. Richardson from 1803 to 1806, when he settled in London; by me from 1806 to 1834; then by Mr. Rutherfurd. Nobody was admitted by any formal vote. New members grew in silently, by a sort of elective attraction. The established taste was for quiet talk and good wine.

And here were many of the best social evenings of some of our best men passed. After Smith and one or two more left us to ourselves, Scott, Thos. Thomson, Jeffrey, and Playfair, were the best clubbists. Scott was absent very seldom, the other three almost never. The professional art of show conversation was held in no esteem. Colloquial ambition would have been so entirely out of place, that there was never even an indication of its approach. The charm was in having such men in their natural condition, during their "careless and cordial hours." The preceding asterisks tell why the association has, for some years, been practically dissolved. Death, sickness, and age, having extinguished its lights, it has been wisely allowed to pass away.

The College was established at Calcutta about the beginning of the century, and Jeffrey was in some danger of being lost by having the honour of obtaining its chair of moral and political science. Horner, who seems to have suggested the scheme, actually advised him to go into this respectable banishment. "I shall have the purest and most cordial pleasure when I hail you professor"—(8th November 1803);

and Jeffrey himself was actually anxious to be so hailed. He said that his feelings consisted of—"1st, a great obligation to you, and *something like humiliation in the persuasion of not deserving so high an estimation.* 2d, a tolerably sober persuasion that I should not be qualified for the duties of the situation; and 3d, a sort of assurance that it will never be put in my power." He adds, however,—"I think I may venture to say that *I should be extremely gratified by such an appointment.* Why do you not apply for it to yourself?"—(12th November 1803.) In a few days he says, "I wait your further communications in perfect tranquillity, and shall bear my disappointment, I am persuaded, as heroically as I did in the case of the collectors of decisions."—(22d November 1803.) What became of the plan I do not know; but mercifully, he did not get it. Poverty alone, the usual reason for voluntary exile, accounts for his ever harbouring the thought of taking it. His professional income this year, after above nine years anxious and steady attendance at the bar, was only £240.—(Letter to Horner, 21st March 1804.)

The intended gown of the Asiatic professor was succeeded by the uniform of the actual ensign.—"I do not know if I told you that a heroic band of us have offered our services as riflemen, and that I have great hopes of turning out an illustrious general before the war is over. I am studying the King of Prussia's tactics, and find I get on amazingly."—(To John, 23d July 1803.) This design failed, and then he took a commission in an excellent Edinburgh battalion. "I am made ensign, with a vast

cocked hat; under which I had the satisfaction of shaking hands with Major David Hume, last Saturday, on the parade."—(To Horner, 21st January 1804.) Volunteering was then unavoidable; whether from patriotism, contagion, or amusement. But it was no nominal service with Jeffrey, because he was a sincere believer in the almost absolute certainty of actual invasion, and that he was to be "piked" at the head of his company. This was certainly not the usual practical feeling. Very few went to parade with any serious impression of either immediate personal or public danger. I forget how long he remained under the cocked hat, but I never saw a worse soldier. He never even got the length of being at home in his uniform, and never cared about his military business; but seemed to be always absorbed in his own speculations. I doubt if the King of Prussia's tactics enabled him to face his company either to the right or to the left.

Towards the close of this year (1803), he was forced into a dispute so contemptible, that, as it is the duty of biography rather to cleanse away, than to perpetuate incidents, which, though they might gratify diseased curiosity, neither illustrate character, nor are of any intrinsic value, I would not notice had it not been that Jeffrey made it the subject of a public defence. The substance of the matter is this: —Mr. John Thelwall, who was acquitted of high treason in London, in 1794, published a volume of poems, which, in April 1803, Jeffrey had reviewed (No. 3, art. 21), with what he thought just ridicule and contempt. Mr. Thelwall came to Edinburgh in

December thereafter, and tried a course of public lectures "on Elocution and Oratory." The course failed on the very first performance, from the laughter of the audience, aggravated, no doubt, by the personal unpopularity here of the lecturer. In a few days Mr. Thelwall published a long and very violent pamphlet, which, besides answering the review, charged Jeffrey with having *confederated* with certain associates to obstruct the lecture, and with having carried this conspiracy into effect by concealing himself behind a screen, and making the necessary signals. All this was stated in the most offensive possible terms. It was thought right, though contrary to Horner's opinion, that Jeffrey should answer, which he did in a few pages, denying the statements. Mr. Thelwall, in order to remove the doubts of his friends by identifying Jeffrey as the conspirator behind the screen, went into the court, and pointed out the guilty man. But this happened to be Sir Walter Scott's friend, Mr. William Erskine; whose dislike of the traitor, which he and others held the acquitted man to be, had no doubt been conspicuous enough at the lecture, though certainly without any concealment or confederacy. Notwithstanding this refutation of the charge, the whole statements were repeated in a reply by Mr. Thelwall, "*To the calumnies, misrepresentations, and literary forgeries*" of his reviewer.*

Jeffrey was in London in the spring of 1804, for the first time, apparently, since the review had given

* I have been told that, many years afterwards, they met amicably.

him celebrity; and enjoyed that world with the delight with which, as a temporary excitement, he always tasted it. "I have come (he tells his brother, 12th April 1804) on the pretext of recruiting for reviews, and of attending an appeal cause or two, but, *entre-nous*, my chief motive has been to enjoy the society of some of my best friends, that are now settled in this place, and to solace myself with the spectacle and the conversation of such of the great political and literary characters as I can get access to. Hitherto I have found the avenues very open, and have been received into a great deal of good company, with some favour and distinction. To say the truth, I never saw anything of London before, and I enter into anything that is proposed to me with all the ardour and expectation of a boy from college. I find so much to do and to attend to that I regret the necessity of eating and sleeping, and, indeed, have not been five hours in bed at a time since my arrival. The literary men, I acknowledge, excite my reverence the least. The powerful conversations alarm me a good deal; and the great public orators fill me with despair."

Of course he could not find in Scotland, or anywhere else, the variety and the brilliancy of London society. But he returned to a society which he entirely loved, and which was worthy of him; and in which he was beginning to rise into that unanimous esteem which he at last, though not speedily, reached.

The society of Edinburgh was not that of a provincial town, and cannot be judged of by any such standard. It was metropolitan. Trade or manufactures

have, fortunately, never marked this city for their own. But it is honoured by the presence of a college famous throughout the world; and from which the world has been supplied with many of the distinguished men who have shone in it. It is the seat of the supreme courts of justice, and of the annual convocation of the Church, formerly no small matter; and of almost all the government offices and influence. At the period I am referring to, this combination of quiet with aristocracy made it the resort, to a far greater extent than it is now, of the families of the gentry, who used to leave their country residences and enjoy the gaiety and the fashion which their presence tended to promote. Many of the curious characters and habits of the receding age, the last purely Scotch age that Scotland was destined to see, still lingered among us. Several were then to be met with who had seen the Pretender, with his court and his wild followers, in the palace of Holyrood. Almost the whole official state, as settled at the union, survived; and all graced the capital, unconscious of the economical scythe which has since mowed it down. All our nobility had not then fled. A few had sense not to feel degraded by being happy at home. The old town was not quite deserted. Many of our principal people still dignified its picturesque recesses and historical mansions, and were dignified by them. The closing of the Continent sent many excellent English families and youths among us, for education and for pleasure. The war brightened us with uniforms, and strangers, and shows.

Over all this there was diffused the influence of

a greater number of persons attached to literature and science, some as their calling, and some for pleasure, than could be found, in proportion to the population, in any other city in the empire. Within a few years, including the period I am speaking of, the college contained Principal Robertson, Joseph Black, his successor Hope, the second Monro, James Gregory, John Robison, John Playfair, and Dugald Stewart; none of them confined monastically to their books, but all (except Robison, who was in bad health) partaking of the enjoyments of the world. Episcopacy gave us the Rev. Archibald Alison; and in Blair, Henry, John Home, Sir Harry Moncreiff, and others, Presbytery made an excellent contribution, the more to be admired that it came from a church which eschews rank, and boasts of poverty. The law, to which Edinburgh has always been so largely indebted, sent its copious supplies; who, instead of disturbing good company by professional matter, an offence with which the lawyers of every place are charged, were remarkably free of this vulgarity; and being trained to take difference of opinion easily, and to conduct discussions with forbearance, were, without undue obtrusion, the most cheerful people that were to be met with. Lords Monboddo, Hailes, Glenlee, Meadowbank, and Woodhouselee, all literary judges, and Robert Blair, Henry Erskine, and Henry Mackenzie senior, were at the earlier end of this file; Scott and Jeffrey at the later; but including a variety of valuable persons between these extremities. Sir William Forbes, Sir James Hall, and Mr. Clerk of Eldin, represented a class of country gentlemen culti-

vating learning on its own account. And there were several, who, like the founder of the Huttonian Theory, selected this city for their residence solely from the consideration in which science and letters were here held, and the facilities, or rather the temptations, presented for their prosecution. Philosophy had become indigenous in the place, and all classes, even in their gayest hours, were proud of the presence of its cultivators. Thus learning was improved by society, and society by learning. And, unless when party spirit interfered, which at one time, however, it did frequently and bitterly, perfect harmony, and indeed lively cordiality, prevailed.

And all this was still a Scotch scene. The whole country had not begun to be absorbed in the ocean of London. There were still little great places;—places with attractions quite sufficient to retain men of talent or learning in their comfortable and respectable provincial positions; and which were dignified by the tastes and institutions which learning and talent naturally rear. The operation of the commercial principle which tempts all superiority to try its fortune in the greatest accessible market, is perhaps irresistible; but anything is surely to be lamented which annihilates local intellect, and degrades the provincial spheres which intellect and its consequences can alone adorn. According to the modern rate of travelling, the capitals of Scotland and of England were then about 2400 miles asunder. Edinburgh was still more distant in its style and habits. It had then its own independent tastes, and ideas, and pursuits. Enough of the generation that was retiring

survived to cast an antiquarian air over the city, and the generation that was advancing was still a Scotch production. Its character may be estimated by the names I have mentioned; and by the fact that the genius of Scott and of Jeffrey had made it the seat at once of the most popular poetry, and the most brilliant criticism, that then existed. This city has advantages, including its being the capital of Scotland, its old reputation, and its external beauties, which have enabled it, in a certain degree, to resist the centralising tendency, and have hitherto always supplied it with a succession of eminent men. But, now that London is at our door, how precarious is our hold of them, and how many have we lost!*

It was in this community that Jeffrey now began to rise. It required some years more to work off the prejudices that had obstructed him, but his genuine excellence did work them off at last; till, from being tolerated, he became liked; from being liked,

* There could scarcely have been a more interesting work than one that described the progress of manners in Scotland from about 1740 to 1800, including accounts of the curious and distinguished people who rose during these sixty years. From about 1800, everything purely Scotch has been fading. A good exhibition of the old habits, and of the eminent and picturesque men, who then existed, but were passing away, would have derived a deeper interest from the certainty that no such national peculiarities could be much longer retained. But such a picture could only have proceeded from a man of observation and intelligence, who had lived in the very scenes, and either collected his materials at the time, or wrote from a vigilant and candid memory. It is to be feared that it can never be done now. But the whole previous history of Scotland furnishes no such subject.

popular; from being popular, necessary; and in the end was wrapped in the whole love of the place. His favourite social scenes, next to his strictly private ones, were the more select parties where intellect was combined with cheerfulness, and good talk with simplicity. But though a great critic of social manners, no one was less discomposed by vulgarities or stupidities, if combined with worth, when they fell in his way. No clever, talking, man could have more tolerance than he had for common-place people; a class indeed, to which many of his best friends belonged. I have heard him, when the supercilious were professing to be shocked by such persons, thank God that he had never lost his taste for bad company.

He had only returned from London a few days, when he lost his sister, Mrs. Napier—a severe affliction; which he announced to his remaining sister, Mrs. Brown, in the following letter, of the 18th of May 1804:—"My dearest Mainie, About the time that I received your letter of anxious inquiry this morning, your husband would receive the melancholy answer. We are a little more composed now, but this has been a very heavy blow upon us all, and much more so on me than I had believed possible. The habit of seeing her almost every day, and of living intimately together since our infancy, had wound so many threads of affection round my heart, that when they were burst at once the shock was almost overwhelming. Then the unequalled gentleness of her disposition, the unaffected worth of her affections, and miraculous simplicity of character and

manners, which made her always appear as pure and innocent as an infant, took so firm, though gentle, a hold on the heart of every one who approached her, —that even those who are comparatively strangers to her worth have been greatly afflicted by her loss. . . . . . During the whole of her illness she looked beautiful, and when I gazed upon her the moment after she had breathed her last, as she lay still, still and calm, with her bright eyes half closed, and her red lips half open, I thought I had never seen a countenance so lovely. A statuary might have taken her for a model. Poor dear love, I kissed her cold lips, and pressed her cold wan lifeless hand, and would willingly at that moment have put off my own life too and followed her. When I came here the sun was rising, and the birds were singing gaily, as I sobbed along the empty streets. I thought my heart would have burst at that moment, and I am sure I shall never forget the agitation I then suffered."

He never forgot another thing. His affection for her who was gone was continued for her children, to whom he was ever a kind and faithful uncle. The duties of that relationship could not be performed with greater fidelity or love. They deserved his kindness; but it was also a constantly renewed homage to the memory of their mother.

A letter to Horner (28th October 1804) contains a prediction, which, had Horner's life been spared, would very probably have been realised.—"Betty's book (he means Miss Hamilton) has not reached me yet. I mean to be merciful, if I touch her at all.

To say the truth, I am sick of abusing. I have not been writing any session (law) papers, nor anything half so good. Nor do I expect to be Lord Advocate till you are Lord Chancellor."

Another of his Edinburgh friends left him soon after this. "Nothing (he writes to Horner, 19th November 1804) but emigration to London. My good friend Charles Bell is about to follow your cursed example. He has almost determined to fly, and to take shelter in the great asylum. I have a very great affection and esteem for him, and can, moreover, assure you that you will find him very modest, intelligent, honourable, grateful, and gentle."

Severe as the death of his sister had been, a far heavier calamity now fell upon him. Mrs. Jeffrey had been in feeble health for some time, but was not supposed to be in danger, when, on the 8th of August 1805, she died. His utter desolation upon this unexpected annihilation of all his enjoyments and hopes can be described by no one but himself. He told his brother what happened in the following letter:—"Edinburgh, 15th August 1805.—My dear John, I am at this moment of all men the most miserable and disconsolate. It is just a week to-day since my sweet Kitty died in my arms, and left me without joy, or hope, or comfort, in this world. Her health had been long very delicate, and during this summer rather more disordered than usual; but we fancied she was with child, and rather looked forward to her complete restoration. She was finally seized with the most excruciating headaches, which ended in an effusion of water on the brain, and sunk

her into a lamentable stupor, which terminated in death. It is impossible for me to describe to you the feeling of lonely and hopeless misery with which I have since been oppressed. I doted upon her, I believe, more than man ever did on a woman before; and after four years of marriage, was more tenderly attached to her than on the day which made her mine. I took no interest in anything which had not some reference to her, and had no enjoyment away from her, except in thinking what I should have to tell or to show her on my return; and I have never returned to her, after half a day's absence, without feeling my heart throb, and my eye brighten, with all the ardour and anxiety of a youthful passion. All the exertions I ever made in the world were for her sake entirely. You know how indolent I was by nature, and how regardless of reputation and fortune. But it was a delight to me to lay these things at the feet of my darling, and to invest her with some portion of the distinction she deserved, and to increase the pride and the vanity she felt for her husband, by accumulating these public tests of his merit. She had so lively a relish for life too, and so unquenchable and unbroken a hope in the midst of protracted illness and languor, that the stroke which cut it off for ever appears equally cruel and unnatural. Though familiar with sickness, she seemed to have nothing to do with death. She always recovered so rapidly, and was so cheerful, and affectionate, and playful, that it scarcely entered into my imagination that there could be one sickness from which she would not recover. We had arranged several little

projects of amusement for the autumn, and she talked of them, poor thing, with unabated confidence and delight, as long as she was able to talk coherently at all. I have the consolation to think that the short time she passed with me was as happy as love and hope could make it. In spite of her precarious health, she has often assured me that she was the happiest of women, and would not change her condition with any human creature. Indeed we lived in a delightful progress of everything that could contribute to our felicity. Everything was opening and brightening before us. Our circumstances, our society, were rapidly improving, our understandings were expanding, and even our love and confidence in each other increasing from day to day. Now I have no interest in anything, and no object or motive for being in the world. I wish you had known my Kitty, for I cannot describe her to you, and nobody else knows enough of her.

"The most peculiar and ennobling part of her character was a high principle of honour, integrity, and generosity, that would have been remarkable in a man, and which I never met with in a woman before. She had no conception of prevaricating, shuffling, or disguising. There was a clear transparency in her soul, without affectation or reserve, which won your implicit confidence, and commanded your respect. Then she was the simplest and most cheerful of human beings; the most unassuming, easy, and affectionate; dignified in her deportment, but affable and engaging in conversation. Her sweetness and cheerfulness in sickness won the hearts

of all who came near her. She was adored by her servants, and has been wept for by her physicians, by the chairmen who used to carry her, and the tradesmen with whom she dealt. O! my dear John, my heart is very cold and heavy, and my prospect of life every way gloomy and deplorable. I had long been accustomed to place all my notions of happiness in domestic life; and I had found it there, so pure, perfect, and entire, that I can never look for it anywhere else, or hope for it in any other form. Heaven protect you from the agony it has imposed upon me! Write me soon to say that you are happy, and that you and your Susan will love me. My heart is shut at this time to everything but sorrow, but I think it must soon open to affection. All your friends here are well. I shall write you again soon.—Ever, my dear John, most affectionately yours, F. J."

All his letters upon this bereavement are fraught with the same tenderness and despair. He never, before or after, was in such suffering, or in such danger. Mrs. Jeffrey was sensible, cheerful, affectionate, and natural; well qualified to recommend him, and to gratify that strong home taste on which, amidst all his worldly gaiety, his real enjoyment almost wholly depended. When his first fabric of happiness was overthrown, and he was left to the loneliness of his own house, with his wife and child in their graves, and neither brother nor sister beside him, there was reason to fear that his sensibility would be too deeply and too permanently agitated to admit of his carrying on the progress in which

he had been so steadily advancing. But his good sense and resolute principle prevailed, and he compelled himself to adhere to the course of his prescribed life. Neither the Review nor his profession was abandoned; society, instead of being renounced, was resorted to more largely as an interruption to the bitterness of his domestic solitude.* Seen externally, he might have been mistaken for one on whose heart sorrow sat lightly. But the truth was told to Horner.—(12th October 1805.)

"I thank you for the repeated inquiries into the state of my feelings. I do not think that time has made any great change on them; yet you will find me social enough, and even gay in society. I cannot bear to talk of what engrosses almost all my thoughts, and tremble at the idea of suggesting to those about me the bitter recollections on which I am secretly dwelling. My friends at a distance know much more of the state of my mind than those who are near me. I can write, or rather I cannot help writing, about them, but I cannot speak. The sight of a serene countenance, the sound of a cheerful voice, locks up my heart. I have never shed a tear in the sight of any male being but George Bell, whom I have known from my infancy, and who was acquainted with my poor Kitty for years before we were married. I will tell you honestly the state of my mind, my dear Horner, because I know you will

* The gentle and pious Cowper, when in one of his afflictions, tells Newton (3d August 1781) that "dissipation itself would be welcome to me, so that it were not a vicious one; but, however earnestly invited, it is coy, and keeps at a distance."

neither despise me nor wonder at me. I am inwardly sick of life, and take no serious interest in any of the objects it offers to me. I receive amusement from its common occurrences very nearly as formerly; but I have no longer any substantial happiness, and everthing that used to communicate it oppresses me. My imagination and my understanding are exercised as they used to be, but my heart is dead, and cold; and I return from these mechanical and habitual exertions to weep over my internal desolation, and to wonder why I linger here."

Notwithstanding this, strong reason, and a strong sense of duty, made him resist despair, and cling to his living friendships, and adhere to the performance of all his tasks; and time began to work its miracle.

The 13th number of the Review, in October 1805, contained an article by him on Southey's Madoc. Most people reading that paper now, and considering the oblivion into which the poem has fallen, will be surprised at the praise given to it, and at the striking beauties pointed out. But as it also pointed out great defects, of course the author's anger was much beyond his gratitude. Mr. Southey came to Edinburgh on the 12th of October, and the article was sent to him before it was given to the public. Jeffrey tells Mr. Horner, in a letter dated that day, that "Southey is to be here to-day with P. Elmsley. I mean to let him read my review of Madoc before I put myself in the way of meeting with him. He is too much a man of the world, I

believe, in spite of his poesy, to decline seeing me, whatever he may think of the critic." They met after this, and, among other places, at the Friday Club; and this is Southey's impression of his new acquaintance:—"I have seen Jeffrey, etc. I met him in good humour, being, by God's blessing, of a happy temper. Having seen him, it would be impossible to be angry at anything so diminutive. We talked upon the question of taste, on which we are at issue; he is a mere child upon that subject. I never met with a man whom it was so easy to checkmate."—(Letter to Will. Taylor, 22d October 1805, in Robberd's Life of Taylor, vol. ii. p. 101.) Jeffrey's being a child in taste, and easily checkmated in discussion, will probably strike those who knew him as novelties in his character. He was much more likely to have played on in spite of the check, or to have prevented his antagonist from seeing that it had been given.

In spring of 1806, another, and the last of the emigrations of his comrades, took place, by the departure for London of Mr. John Richardson, now of Kirklands, and one of the most distinguished of the respectable body of Scotch solicitors there. He is already favourably known to the public by the biographies of his friends Scott and Campbell; and the more that the lives of others of the best literary men of his time shall be disclosed, the more will his merit as their associate appear. Few persons have combined with greater success, and with less ostentation, the regular toil of a laborious profession, with the indulgence of a literary taste. Had he followed

the bent of his inclination, literature would probably have been his vocation. But he has done much better, were it only by the example which he has set. He knew Jeffrey in the days of the Lawnmarket, from which beginning there was nothing but friendship ever between them. So far back as 1801 (17th March), Jeffrey, writing to Campbell, who had arranged a journey with Richardson to Germany, says—"Among other things, I envy you not a little for your companion. I do not know *any man* with whom a constant and intimate society would be so pleasing. He has a gentleness of character that must soften vexation, and make fretfulness ashamed; and he is the only person I have ever met with who had all the enthusiasm and simplicity of the romantic character, without one shade either of its pedantry or its ridicule."

The Whigs were in office from the end of 1805 to April 1807. But deeply as Jeffrey reverenced their principles, and powerfully as he ever maintained their cause, this gleam of their success made no change in his position, and, except on public grounds, seems not to have interested his thoughts. He joined the people of Scotland in the few and slight efforts for their political elevation which they could then make. But the local managers of the Government had an inadequate idea of his importance; and his relations to them were not improved by an article which had appeared in the Review (No. 8, art. 8) on a work on political economy by the Earl of Lauderdale, and had given mortal offence to the noble author, who acted as the Scotch minister;

which offence had not been assuaged by certain pamphlets on both sides, by which the criticism had been succeeded.

In summer of 1806 he revisited London with Mr. Thomson and Mr. Murray. The 16th number of the Review had been published shortly before. It contained an article which produced a temporary difference between him and Moore. It was a criticism by Jeffrey on Moore's "Epistles, Odes, and other Poems," and contained as severe a condemnation of these productions, on the ground of their immorality, as the English language, even when wielded by Jeffrey, could express. The critic, of course, was to be supposed to have been only discussing the book; but there was a cordiality, and a personal application, in the censure, which made it natural for the public, and nearly irresistible for the author, to refer it to the man. This (no matter through what details) led to a hostile meeting near London on the 11th of August 1806, when Horner acted as Jeffrey's friend. The police, fortunately, had discovered what was intended, and suddenly apprehended the parties when they were in the very act of proceeding to the very last extremity.* Being

* On reaching the police office it was found that Jeffrey's pistol contained no bullet then; either because it must have dropped out when the officer *snatched* it from him, or afterwards in the officer's hands. Mr. Moore's bullet was still in his pistol, and Mr. Horner was certain that one had been put into Jeffrey's. Yet Byron thought it worth while, but only under the ferocity of the English Bards and Scotch Reviewers, to sneer at "*Little's leadless pistol.*" Little's, moreover, being the one that was *not* leadless.

bound over to keep the peace in this country, they were very nearly going over to Hamburg; but a little explanation made this unnecessary. Mr. Moore withdrew a defiance which he had given on the idea that the imputations were personal; on which Jeffrey declared that he had meant them to be only literary; and the quarrel was ended. The following is Jeffrey's account of the matter to George Joseph Bell (22d August 1806):—

"I am happy to inform you that the business is at length amicably settled. Moore agreed to withdraw his defiance; and then I had no hesitation in assuring him (as I was ready to have done at the beginning, if he had applied amicably) that in writing the review I considered myself merely as the censor of the morality of his book, and that I intended to assert nothing as to the personal motives or personal character of the author, of whom I had no knowledge at the time. Those, I think, are the words of my explanation. We have since breakfasted together very lovingly. He has professed his penitence for what he has written, and declared that he will never again apply any little talent he may possess to such purposes; and I have said, that I shall be happy to praise him whenever I find that he has abjured those objectionable topics. You are too severe upon the little man. He has behaved with great spirit throughout this business. He really is not profligate, and is universally regarded, even by those who resent the style of his poetry, as an innocent, good-hearted, idle fellow. If he comes to Scotland, as he talks of doing in November, I hope

you will not refuse to sit down with him at my table. We were very near going to Hamburg after we had been bound over here; but it is much better as it is. I am glad I have gone through this scene, both because it satisfies me that my nerves are good enough to enable me to act in conformity to my notions of propriety without any suffering, and because it also assures me that I am really as little in love with life, as I have been for some time in the habit of professing."

The sincerity of this last sentiment was confirmed by Mr. Horner, who told Sir Charles Bell that, with all his "admiration of Jeffrey's intrepidity, he feared there was much indifference of life."—(Note by Bell at the time.) In a day or two the critic and the criticised met amicably, and were friends ever after. Jeffrey did not merely admire the genius of his adversary, but, after he knew him, had a sincere affection and respect for the man. Moore delights to tell, in one of his prefaces, that "in the most formidable of all my censors, the great master of criticism in our day, I have found since one of the most cordial of all my friends." He came to Scotland chiefly to visit Jeffrey, in 1825; and was asked so often to sing his last new song, "Ship, ahoy," that in another preface, he says that—"the upland echoes of Craigcrook ought long to have had its burden by heart."

After this affair, leaving Thomson in the British Museum, Jeffrey went with Horner and Murray, and visited the southern coast of England. This was one of his many journeys for scenery alone.

They were more frequent with him than is usual with busy men, and he was never satiated by revisiting places, which, though their novelty was gone, were hallowed by beauty in his imagination. He walked, when very young, with his friend Dr. Maton, through the then solitary valleys of Wales. Many a time did he and Morehead explore the lakes and the mountains of Scotland; and there was as much of the genuine enjoyment of nature, as much affection and speculation, and as many fresh-made sonnets, in one of their foot and knapsack expeditions, as in some journeys of greater pretension. This sensibility to the attractions of nature transpires in all his writings. The very reverse of this quality was sometimes imputed to him by those who had an interest in depreciating his judgments. Knowing that he was a lawyer and a critic, hard trades, they thought that they could never be far wrong in asserting that he had neither romance nor heart for nature. It is possible that out of his masses of critical disquisition, especially in the disputable regions of poetry, angry authors, and even persons in a less partial position, might be able to select passages indicating what they may plausibly represent as a cold or artificial taste. But these blots, if they exist, of which I am not aware, are very few, and entirely accidental; and are extinguished by countless examples of an opposite description, and by the general character of his writings.

He seems to have expected solitude in the south of England in autumn; and of course was tormented everywhere by the outpourings of London. "For my

own part, I think it a great annoyance, and am a thousand times better pleased with pacing alone on the lovely sands, than in renewing a London life, in small hot apartments, and listening to the eternal sophistications of indolent coquetry and languid derision." "I am every hour more convinced of the error of those who look for happiness in anything but concentred and tranquil affection; and the still more miserable error of those who think to lessen the stupidity of a heartless existence by a laborious course of amusements, and by substituting the gratification of a restless vanity for the exercise of the heart and understanding. If I were to live a hundred years in London, I should never be seduced into that delusion. So you will not tell me what bracelets you would like, say at least whether you mean clasps, or bracelets."—(To Mrs. Morehead, from Bognor Rocks, 25th August 1806.)

He tried to escape, and crossed to the Isle of Wight, but found the same thing there. "I am glad (to Mr. Morehead, 28th August 1806) to have seen these people, and some of them I should like to see again, but I could not live among them. That eternal breaking of time and affection, by living in a crowd, and attending to a thousand things together, would never suit my notions of happiness or respectability. I languish perpetually for the repose and tranquillity of rational and domestic society; the quietness of the heart, and the activity of the imagination only. You have found this, my dear Bob, and I have lost it for ever."

The only purely Scotch measure that the Whig

Government introduced was one for the improvement of the administration of justice; being the commencement of that succession of organic judicial changes which has gone on almost ever since. Most of the younger Whig lawyers opposed the more important parts of the scheme patronised by their Whig seniors, as unwise in principle, and unsuited to the condition and wants of Scotland. The party lost its powers before its object could be accomplished, and a more moderate measure was soon carried by its successors. The juniors were chiefly guided throughout all these discussions by Jeffrey; who, besides taking a lead in the meetings of the Faculty, wrote a paper in the Review (No. 18, article 14), which, though Horner calls it "*clever, sceptical, and flippant*" (Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 10), was not only amusing, but sound. It suggested considerations, questioned principles, and tended to abate legal bigotries. His opposition, and that of his followers, was honourable to them, because what they chiefly objected to was the introduction of two or three high judicial offices, which were notoriously intended for their own political friends, while better men of the opposite party, such as Blair, who was at the head of the bar, were to be set aside.

Mr. John Allen seems to have remonstrated with Jeffrey on his opposition; to which Jeffrey answers (17th March 1807)—"What is thought of the bill now? and what is thought of us, and of our virtue? I am myself most anxious for reform and for great change; but I cannot dissemble my suspicions of jobbism. It is nonsense to say that this kind of

opposition endangers the whole measure. It is infinitely more endangered by the doings to which we are opposed. I shall believe that the supporters of the scheme are seriously persuaded of the utility of a Scottish Chancellor and Court of Review, when I hear that they are to offer it to Blair, who is best entitled to it. At the same time, you know that I love the Whigs, and it grieves me to see that they will act like placemen."

The material step of reconstructing the court, by dividing it into two chambers, was soon effected by the new Government; and, to the delight of all fair and reasonable people, Robert Blair was raised to the Presidency of the whole. But alas! in two years he—one of the most upright of men, and, from the pure weight of his character, one of the best liked of strict and dignified judges—was followed to the grave by the sorrow of all Edinburgh.

Jeffrey was now on very good terms with all the judges; but the one as yet on the bench with whom he was most on habits of personal intercourse, was Allan Maconochie, Lord Meadowbank; a person of very considerable learning, of singular ingenuity, and of restless mental activity. Nothing (except perhaps mathematics) came amiss to him; but, besides literature and metaphysics, his favourite subjects used to rise out of any views connected with the theoretical history of man and his progress, which, being inextricably involved in speculation, had peculiar attractions both for him and for Jeffrey. He was a very able judge; full of varied knowledge, and ready at all times for an argument, with anybody, upon any-

thing. The prospect of meeting with this powerful and entertaining intellect was always a temptation to Jeffrey to take a case on the criminal circuit; and although he sometimes thought my lord more ingenious than sound in court, this only whetted the evening discussion, where the one was as good as the other. There are several such incidents as this in his letters, and always with the same term for the judge's supposed error—"I had my trial next day, where I made a merry speech, and was defeated on a *crotchet* of Meadowbank's. I went with William Erskine, who came out to oppose me, to the ball in the evening; but there were only six ladies and no beauties, so I did not stay long, but came home and discussed with Meadowbank." His Lordship died in 1816.

The brothers were reduced to a melancholy similarity of fate by the death of John's wife at Boston, in 1806. Francis gave him such consolation and advice as his own experience supplied. "Come, then, my dear John, as soon as you can desert your present duties—come, and find me as affectionate, and unreserved, and domestic, as you knew me in our more careless days. I think I shall be able to comfort you, and revive in you some little interest in life; though I cannot undertake to restore that happiness, which, when once cut down, revives not in this world."—"I hope that, even at present, you do not indulge in solitude. I never had courage for it, and was driven by a cruel instinct into the company of strangers."—(28th January 1807.) This blow could not sink deeper into John than it had

done into Francis; but he was graver and idler, and its effects continued longer.

His practice, which was always advancing, included the whole of our courts, civil, criminal, and even ecclesiastical, the most fee-less of them all. It was in May 1807 that I first encountered him in the General Assembly, where for the next twenty years he had an unchallenged monopoly on one side. A seat, as a member in that house, the only established popular assembly then in Scotland, was a common ambition with such lawyers, whether at the bar or on the bench, as were anxious about a certain description of party affairs, and had no aversion to opportunities of display. It was often wondered how Jeffrey could resist being a member. But he was indifferent about its ordinary business, and thought that the possession of its bar, though its emoluments were scarcely visible, improved his general professional position. He was always interested, moreover, in that singular place.

It is a sort of Presbyterian convocation, which meets, along with a commissioner representing the Crown, for about twelve days yearly. It consists of about 200 clergymen, and about 150 lay elders, presided over by a reverend president, called the Moderator, who is elected by the Assembly annually, and very seldom more than once. Its jurisdiction is both judicial and legislative. As an ecclesiastical parliaenmt, it exercises, subject to very ill defined limitations, a censorian and corrective authority over all the evils, and all affairs, of the church. As a court, it deals out what appears to it to be justice upon all

ecclesiastical delinquencies and disputes. Its substance survives, but, in its air and tone, it has every year been degrading more and more into the likeness of common things; till at last the primitive features which, half-a-century ago, distinguished it from every other meeting of men in this country, have greatly faded. Yet how picturesque it still is! The royal commissioner and his attendants, all stiff, brilliant, and grotesque, in court attire. The members gathered from every part of the country,—from growing cities, lonely glens, distant islands, agricultural districts, universities, and fallen burghs;—the varieties of dialect and tone, uncorrupted fifty years ago by English;—the kindly greetings;—the social arrangements;—the party plots;—the strangeness of the subjects—partly theological, partly judicial, partly political, often all mixed—of the deepest apparent importance to the house, however insignificant or incomprehensible to others;—the awkwardness of their forms, and the irregularity of their application;—their ignorance of business;—the conscientious intolerance of the rival sects;—the helplessness, when the storm of disorder arises, of the poor shortlived inexperienced Moderator;—the mixture of clergy and laity, of nobility and commoners, civilians and soldiers;—the curious efforts of oratory;—the ready laughter, even among the grim;—and consequently the easy jokes. Higher associations arise when we think of the venerable age of the institution; the noble struggles in which it has been engaged; the extensive usefulness of which it is capable; and the eminent men and the

great eloquence it has frequently brought out; including, in modern times, the dignified persuasiveness of Principal Robertson, the graceful plausibility of Dr. George Hill, the Principal's successor as the leader of the church's majority; the manly energy of Sir Harry Moncreiff, and the burning oratory of Chalmers. Connecting every jurisdiction, and every member of the church (which then meant the people), into one body, it was calculated to secure the benefits, without the dangers, of an official superintendence of morals and religion; and to do, in a more open and responsible way, for the Church of Scotland, what is done, or not done, by the bishops for the Church of England. Such a senate might have continued to direct and control the cheapest, the most popular, and the most republican, established church in the world. Its essential defect is as a court of justice. Nothing can ever make a mob of 300 people a safe tribunal for the decision of private causes; and the Assembly's forms are framed as if the object were to aggravate the evil.

It met in those days, as it had done for about two hundred years, in one of the aisles of the then grey and venerable cathedral of St. Giles. That plain, square, galleried apartment was admirably suited for the purpose; the more so that it was not too large; and it was more interesting, from the men who had acted in it and the scenes it had witnessed, than any other existing room in Scotland. It had beheld the best exertions of the best men in the kingdom, ever since the year 1640. Yet was it obliterated in the year 1830 with as much indifference

as if it had been of yesterday; and for no reason except a childish desire for new walls and change. The Assembly sat there for the last time in May 1829; and it has never been the Assembly since.

Its bar, though beneath him, had several attractions for Jeffrey. It needed no legal learning, and no labour beyond attendance; but always required judgment and management; it presented excellent opportunities for speaking, especially as the two inconvenient checks of relevancy and pertinency were seldom in rigid observance; and it was the most popular of all our established audiences. He constantly treated them to admirable speeches—argumentative, declamatory, or humorous, as the occasion might require. Accordingly, he was a prodigious favourite. They felt honoured by a person of his eminence practising before them; and their liking for the individual, with his constant liberality and candour, was still stronger than their admiration of his talents, and even their detestation of his politics. It was thought a dull day when he was not there. And when there, he could say and do whatever he chose; but never risked his popularity by carelessness or presumption; and never once descended to the vulgarity of pleasing, by anything unbecoming a counsel of the highest character and the best taste. He was once in some danger, when, in defending a clerical client against a charge of drunkenness, he first contested the evidence, and then assuming it to be sufficient, tried to extenuate the offence; and among other considerations, asked "*If there was a single reverend gentleman in the house who could lay his*

hand on his heart, and say that he had never been overtaken by the same infirmity?" There was an instant roar of order, apology, rebuke, etc. But he subdued them at once, by standing till they were quiet, and then saying, with a half innocent, half cunning, air,—"I beg your pardon, Moderator,—*it was entirely my ignorance of the habits of the Church;*" and the offence was forgiven in a general laugh.

It was in the Assembly, or in connection with its business, that he first became acquainted with his future friend, the late Rev. Sir Harry Moncreiff, Bart., whom it is the more necessary to mention, because there was no one who had a greater influence over Jeffrey's conduct and opinions, particularly in relation to Scotch matters.

Sir Henry Moncreiff.

This eminent person was not merely distinguished among his brethren of the Church of Scotland, all of whom leant upon him, but was in other respects one of the most remarkable and admirable men of his age. Small grey eyes, an aquiline nose, vigorous lips, a noble head, and the air of a plain hereditary gentleman, marked the outward man. The prominent qualities of his mind were, strong integrity and nervous sense. There never was a sounder understanding. Many men were more learned, many more cultivated, and some more able. But who could match him in sagacity and mental force? The opinions of Sir Harry Moncreiff might at any time have been adopted with perfect safety, without knowing more about them than that they were his.

And he was so experienced in the conduct of affairs, that he had acquired a power of forming his views with what seemed to be instinctive acuteness, and with a decisiveness which raised them above being slightly questioned. Nor was it the unerring judgment alone that the public admired. It venerated the honourable heart still more. A thorough gentleman in his feelings, and immovably honest in his principles, his whole character was elevated into moral majesty. He was sometimes described as overbearing. And in one sense, to the amusement of his friends, perhaps he was so. Consulted by everybody, and of course provoked by many, and with very undisciplined followers to lead, his superiority gave him the usual confidence of an oracle; and this, operating on a little natural dogmatism, made him sometimes seem positive, and even hard; an impression strengthened by his manner. With a peremptory conclusiveness, a shrill defying voice, and a firm concentrated air, he appeared far more absolute than he really was, for he was ever candid and reasonable. But his real gentleness was often not seen; for if his first clear exposition did not convince, he was not unapt to take up a short disdainful refutation; which, however entertaining to the spectator, was not always comfortable to the adversary. But all this was mere manner. His opinions were uniformly liberal and charitable, and, when not under the actual excitement of indignation at wickedness or dangerous folly, his feelings were mild and benignant; and he liberalised his mind by that respectable intercourse with society which

improves the good clergyman, and the rational man of the world.

I was once walking with him in Queen Street, within the last three years of his life. A person approached who had long been an illiberal opponent of his, and for whom I understood that he had no great regard. I expected them to pass without recognition on either side. But instead of this, Sir Harry, apparently to the man's own surprise, stopped, and took him by the hand, and spoke kindly to him. When they separated, I said to Sir Harry that I thought he had not liked that person. "Oh! no. He's a foolish, intemperate creature. *But to tell you the truth, I dislike a man fewer every day that I live now.*" When the Whigs were in office, in 1806, one of his ecclesiastical adversaries, after having always opposed Catholic emancipation, wrote to him that if the subject should be renewed in the next assembly, he would now support it. It was renewed, but by that time the Whigs were displaced; and that very person opposed it, and, among other things, had the audacity to say that he could not comprehend how any Protestant clergyman could encourage Popery. Sir Harry was in great indignation, and told me himself that, when answering this, he put his hand into his pocket, and was on the very point of crushing his wavering friend by producing and reading his own letter, but that "*when I looked at ———'s face and saw his wretchedness, I had not the heart to do it.*" These were not the feelings of a hard man.

His great instrument of usefulness was his public

speaking; the style of which may be inferred from that of his intellect and manner. In the pulpit, where he was elevated above worldly discord, he often rose into great views and powerful declamation; and he was the noblest deliverer of prayers at striking funerals. But though these professional exertions showed his powers, it was chiefly in the contests of men that his speaking was exerted, and was generally known. On such occasions it was so utterly devoid of ornament, that out of forty years of debate, it would be difficult to cull one sentence of rhetoric. And though very eloquent, he was never disturbed by the consciousness or the ambition of being so. It was never the eloquence of words, or of sentiments, conceived for effect, but of a high-minded practical man, earnestly impressed with the importance of a practical subject; and who, thinking of his matter alone, dealt in luminous and powerful reasoning; his views clearly conceived, and stated with simplicity and assuredness. A fearful man to grapple with.*

His writing, though respectable, was feeble, at least to those who knew the energy of his speaking language and manner. The life of Dr. John Erskine was one of the very best subjects for Scotch biography of the last age; and he has not made the most of it. Except in very short writings, on sub-

* There was really great justice in the remark of a little old north country minister, who, proud both of himself as a member, and of the Reverend Baronet who was predominating in the assembly, said to his neighbour, "Preserve me, sir! hoo that man Sir Harry does go on! *He puts me in mind o' Jupiter among the lesser gods.*"

jects of instant and practical importance, his vigour did not get into his pen.

As almost all our livings belong to the crown or landowners, there could be little political independence in the church in his day. This made his merit the greater in being a conspicuous and constant Whig. He very seldom mingled in the secular proceedings of the party, but his opinions were well known, and had great influence with the people, to whom his mere name was a tower of strength. Had he not preferred his church to every other object, there was no public honour to which he might not have fought his way. He would have been a powerful counsel of the highest class, an admirable judge, a first-rate head of any important public department, and a great parliamentary leader. His conversation was excellent; spirited, intelligent, and natural; and never better than when his solid understanding was tried against the speculative playfulness of Jeffrey. They were cordial friends, and Jeffrey delighted especially to visit him, when in his country gentleman condition, in his feudal tower of Tulliebole.

The Review had now gone on above six years, and its periodical appearance was looked for as that of the great exponent of what people should think on matters of taste and policy. No British journal had ever held such sway over the public mind. Nor had any one ever approached it in extent of circulation. Jeffrey's own contributions already amounted to seventy-nine articles, furnished to the twenty-six numbers that had been published; being

on an average above one article every month. This was in addition to the vexatious labour of the editorship, and while struggling to encourage his professional practice, and amidst the distress of Mrs. Jeffrey's death, and a nearly constant immersion in society. Nor had he made his task easier by restricting it to a single department, or to few. Among these papers are profound and original disquisitions on many of the most difficult subjects, including metaphysics, politics, biography, morals, poetry, travels, political economy, and some physical science. His whole opinions and tastes were evolved in these articles.

The journal was thus advancing with unexampled and unchecked success, when, in February 1809, the Quarterly appeared. This was an era in the history both of the Edinburgh and of its conductor. The Quarterly was his first, and indeed throughout the whole of his editorship, his only, formidable rival. It withdrew Scott from his allegiance to the original work; and it established a receptacle for the contributions of those, against whom, from its opinions, the Edinburgh Review was closed.

It used to be said that the new Journal was an unwilling result of the dangerous principles of the previous one, chiefly on the war, and on domestic reform. Its various other offences might have been forgiven; but, engaged as we were in a struggle for existence, there could be no toleration for a work which eagerly obstructed government by inflaming discontent at home, and encouraged our foreign enemy, and dispirited the people, by perpetual demonstra-

tions of the impossibility of our succeeding in the vital conflict. The provocation given by years of this misconduct was said to have been so aggravated by an article published in October 1808, on an account given by Don Pedro Cevallos of the French usurpations in Spain, that neither patience nor friendship could endure it longer; and that, therefore, the incorrigible journal was debarred, as it occasionally had been before (but always to the increase of its circulation), from the houses of some of its usual readers,* and a work on more patriotic principles was resolved on. Mr. Jeffrey, it is added, had been warned of the consequence of his rashness, and was himself so sensible of improprieties to which he had at least been accessory, that he had actually engaged to Sir Walter Scott "*that no party politics should appear again in his Review.*"—(Letter from Scott to George Ellis, Dec. 1808, in Lockhart's Life of Scott, vol. ii. p. 219.)

There is some truth in all this, and much error.

The statement by Sir Walter implies so serious a charge, that the moment it appeared several of Jeffrey's friends advised him to contradict it if it was incorrect. But he thought that the idea of his having engaged, after party politics had been the

* The late Earl of Buchan, not a stupid but a very vain and foolish man, made the door of his house in George Street be opened, and the Cevallos number be laid down on the innermost part of the floor of his lobby; and then, after all this preparation, his Lordship, personally, *kicked* the book out to the centre of the street, where he left it to be trodden into the mud; which he had no doubt must be the fate of the whole work—after this open proof of his high disapprobation.

right leg of the Review for above six years, that there should be no more party politics in it, and then continuing to put as much of them into it as ever, was so strange that nobody could fail to ascribe it to mistake; and, therefore, he allowed it to remain unanswered for seven years. But when he was writing the preface to the publication of his Selected Contributions, in the end of 1843, he thought that a natural opportunity of noticing it had occurred; and he made a very graceful, and, towards Scott, a handsome explanation. Its substance is that Sir Walter *must* have misunderstood him; probably by mistaking a general expression of a desire to avoid *violent* politics, for a pledge to avoid all politics; or must have afterwards expressed himself inaccurately in a hasty and familiar letter. There is no one who considers what the Review had been, and what it continued to be, and what Jeffrey's character was, to whom this explanation will not be satisfactory.

The article on Cevallos has been often ascribed to a different person; but it was written by Jeffrey. It raised a great outcry, which, however, was not owing to any particular guilt in that paper; for it is not worse than many that had gone before it; but it happened to be ill-timed. It dared to despair of what was then called the regeneration of Spain; and this at the very moment when most people's hearts were agitated with delight in the belief that this glorious change had already begun, and that the Peninsula was henceforth to be inhabited by a population of patriots. No one who doubted this could

then be endured. But it was not this solitary article, however detestable, that produced the rival journal. The only wonder is, how it was not produced sooner. With the principles of the popular party so powerfully maintained in one publication, it was impossible that the principles of the opposite party could remain undefended by another. Had Don Pedro Cevallos never appeared, and had the subordinate indiscretions of the existing Review been all avoided, and had even its political matter been diluted down to insignificance, still, unless its public tone and doctrines had been positively reversed, or party politics altogether excluded, a periodical work in defence of Church, Tory, and War principles, must have arisen; simply because the defence of these principles required it. The defence was a consequence of the attack. And it is fortunate that it was so. For, besides getting these opinions fairly discussed, the party excesses natural to any unchecked publication were diminished; and a work arose which, in many respects, is an honour to British literature, and has called out, and indirectly reared, a great variety of the highest order of talent.

Jeffrey's feelings on seeing the first number of his rival, were these,—"I have seen the Quarterly this morning. It is an inspired work, compared with the poor prattle of Cumberland. But I do not think it very formidable; and if it were not for our offences, I should have no fear about its consequences." "Tell me what you hear, and what you think, of this new Quarterly; and do not let yourself imagine that I feel any unworthy jealousy, and still less any un-

worthy fear, on the occasion. My natural indolence would have been better pleased not to be always in sight of an alert and keen antagonist. But I do rejoice at the prospect of this kind of literature, which seems to be more and more attended to than any other, being generally improved in quality, and shall be proud to have set an example."—(To Horner, 4th March 1809.)

The favourite imputation, that the politics of the Edinburgh Review were all merely intended to facilitate the return of the Whigs to power, in so far as it was meant to impute dishonesty or factiousness to its conductor, are amply refuted by the knowledge of all his friends of his disinterested sincerity, and of the fact that on many occasions he gave great offence, when he thought it his duty to do so, to his own party. Upon the two great points of the war, and of that Whiggism which urged the due cultivation of the people, he has recorded his conviction, of the hopelessness of the one, and the necessity of the other, in one or two of his letters.

"I must say that a temperate, firm, and enlightened article on Spain, would, of all other things, be the most serviceable and restorative to us at this crisis. I cannot indeed comprehend your grounds of hope. But the public will; and I am willing enough to be enlightened. At all events, something gravely and soberly said upon this topic would be quite medicinal in this stage of the malady. I am really anxious to see some grounds of comfort for my own sake. For my honest impression is, that Bonaparte will be in Dublin in about fifteen months; perhaps

sooner. And then if I survive, I shall try to go to America. I hate despotism and insolence so much, that I could bear a great deal rather than live here under Frenchmen, and such wretches as will at first be employed by them."—(To Horner, 29th December 1808.)

"I still hanker after peace, chiefly I own out of fear, and out of despair; not very noble motives either of them, but pretty powerful, and well calculated to have weight with the prudent. I do in my heart think that we are in very considerable danger of losing Ireland within eighteen months; and then how is England to be kept? Or would it be worth keeping, by the present generation, at the expense of all the bloodshed, and treachery, and guilt, and misery, which the struggle would produce? Then, as to foreign affairs, I own I make up my mind to see everything subdued by France on the Continent; and therefore I do not agree with you that any new usurpation or plans of conquest there, should be allowed to break a peace once concluded with England. Indeed, our interference is likely enough to exasperate and accelerate, and afford a sort of apology in future, as it has done in past times. The beneficial chances of peace are obvious; and I would rather take them, with all the hazards, than persist in our present downward course."—(To Horner, 25th January 1811.)

Then, as to home politics, his opinions were in substance just those of the Whig party; but with this material qualification, that he was one of those who always thought that even the Whigs were dis-

posed to govern too much through the influence of the aristocracy, and through a few great aristocratical families, without making the people a direct political element. He stated this view in the following letter to Mr. Horner, 26th October 1809:—"In the main, I think our opinions do not differ very widely; and, in substance and reality, you seem to me to admit all that I used to contend with you about. In the first place, you admit now that *there is* a spirit of discontent, or disaffection if you choose to call it so, among the people, which must be managed and allayed, in some way or other, if we wish to preserve tranquillity. And, in the next place, you admit that the leading Whigs belong to the aristocracy, and have been obliged to govern themselves a great deal by the necessity of managing this aristocracy. Now, all I say is, that there is a radical contest and growing struggle between the aristocracy and democracy of this country; and agreeing entirely with you that its freedom must depend in a good measure on their coalition, I still think that the aristocracy is the weakest, and ought to give way, and that the blame of the catastrophe will be heaviest on those who provoke a rupture by maintaining its pretensions. When I said I had no confidence in Lord Grey or Grenville, I meant no more than that I thought them too aristocratical, and, consequently, likely to be inefficient. They will never be trusted by the Court, nor cordial with the Tories; and, I fear, unless they think less of the aristocracy and its interests and prerogatives, they will every day have less influence with the people.

"I have no doubt of their individual honour and integrity, and am disposed to think highly of their talents. You ask too much of the people, when you ask them to have great indulgence for the ornaments and weaknesses of refined life. You should consider what a burdensome thing Government has grown; and into what dangers and difficulties they have been led by trusting implicitly to those refined rulers. As long as they are suffering and angry, they will have no indulgence for these things; and every attempt to justify or uphold them will be felt as an insult. I still think our greatest immediate hazard is from without. But I differ from you still more in your opinion that we are more in danger of falling under a military tyranny through the common course of internal tumult and disorder, than of having our present Government consolidated into something a good deal like despotism without any stir. The very same want of virtue which makes all popular commotion likely to end in military tyranny, gives reason to fear for the result of a passive obedience on one hand, and bad, unprincipled measures, on the other. Unless something be done, or happen, to conciliate, one or other of the parties will come to act in a decided manner by and by. I own to you that, with the Government in the hands of Wellesleys and Melvilles, and with the feeling that something vigorous *must* be hazarded, I should rather expect to see the Habeas Corpus Act suspended—Cobbett and the Edinburgh Review prosecuted—newspapers silenced—and all the common harbingers of tyranny sent out, than to witness

any alarming symptoms of popular usurpation and violence. The same cause, however, promises to avert both disasters. The people are both stronger, and wiser, and more discontented, than those who are not the people will believe. Let the true friends of liberty and the constitution join with the people, assist them to ask, with dignity and with order, all that ought to be granted, and endeavour to withhold them from asking more. But for both purposes let them be gracious and cordial with them, and not by distrust, and bullying, and terror, exasperate them, and encourage the Court party to hazard a contest that will be equally fatal, however it issue.* I thank you very gratefully for all you promise to do for the Review. I hope you will go a little beyond the mere examination of the translation, and say something still of Fox, or of the French, or of other countries that could never produce such a character."

In judging of this and all his writings, we must remember the rule under which he cautioned Horner that they must be read. (13th August 1809.)—"I have done a very long rambling thing on parliamentary reform; in which I think there are some inaccuracies, and some positions you will think false; but I beg you to judge it, as I fear you must judge all that I say or write, by the whole *broad effect and honest meaning,* without keeping me to

* See a letter with the same views to Mr. Horner, in Horner's Memoirs, ii. 10, and No. 30, art. 15, of the Review, where the same view is taken, and is expressed in the same spirit.

points or phrases, or making me answer for exaggerations. I wrote it while they were printing, and have no anxiety except for your judgment and that of about three other persons."

These opinions may have been all unsound, and consequently dangerous; but there was surely nothing in them that could make any person of candour impute what he may think the mischievous doctrines of the Review to wickedness, on the part of either its conductor or its contributors.

The number which had appeared in January 1808 contained the criticism on Lord Byron's Hours of Idleness (No. 22, art. 2), which his Lordship declares had inflamed him into "rage, resistance, and redress." Accordingly, in March 1809, he exploded in his English Bards and Scotch Reviewers; which wastes its fiercest and most contemptuous bitterness on Jeffrey, whom he believed to have been the author of the offensive article. But he was wrong in this opinion, for it was written by a different person. It would be idle to answer anything contained in a satire which its author himself came to describe as a "*ferocious rhapsody*," and "*a miserable record of misplaced anger and indiscriminate acrimony*." He afterwards did justice to Jeffrey, both as a man and a critic, and even told the world of him,—"*you have acted on the whole most nobly*."—(Don Juan, 10, 16.)

The following letter proves how entirely Lord Byron, had survived his hatred of the Review and its editor.

"February 28, 1815.

"My dear Sir—Mr. Hobhouse will not feel less gratified than I have felt, in your approbation and acceptance of his article, which will be faithfully conveyed to him."

"Whatever pride I may have felt in your praise of works which I will not affect to undervalue, since they have been sanctioned by your judgment, is nevertheless far inferior to the pleasure I should derive from the power of exciting, and the opportunity of cultivating, your personal friendship. My former letter in 1812 was written under circumstances of embarrassment; for, although you had not allowed my rashness to operate upon your public sentence, I was by no means sure that your private feelings were equally unbiassed. Indeed, I felt that I did not deserve that they should be so, and was, besides, not a little apprehensive of the misconstruction which might be put upon my motives by others, though your own spirit and generosity would acquit me of such to yourself. I shall be now most happy to obtain and preserve whatever portion of your regard you may allot to me. The whole of your conduct to me has already secured mine, with many obligations which would be oppressive, were it not for my esteem of him who has conferred them.—I hope we shall meet before a very long time has elapsed, and then, and now, I would willingly endeavour to sustain your good opinion.

"I think Waverley can be none but Scott's. There are so many of his familiar phrases—'Balmawhapple was with difficulty *got to horse*;' 'any gentleman

curious in Christian burial;' 'poor Rose here *lost* heart;' and a hundred other expressions are so like some of his in letters, that, though slight, I think them sure indications of his touches. Be it whose it may, it is the best novel, to my mind, of many years, and, I cannot help thinking, will outlive Mrs. Radcliffe and all her ghostly graduates. We have not got 'Guy' yet. I should be very happy to try my hand upon some of your humbler patients; but I must take some time and pains, and cannot hope, like Gil Blas, to acquire the whole art at once. Nothing has ever surprised me more than the uniform tone of good writing and original thinking which has been kept up amidst such variety, and even in the drier articles, of the E. R., and I would not adventure myself hastily into so much good company. Our friend Moore does as well as if he had done nothing else all his life; but the fact is, he has powers and versatility of talent for what he will. I have brought myself to the end of my sheet. I know you are very busy, professionally and literarily (if there be such a word), and will only beg you not to throw away your time in answering me, till fully and leisurely disposed so far to oblige ever yours most truly, BYRON.

"*P.S.*—'Poetry!'—O Lord! I have been married these two months."

In May 1810, he removed from Queen Street, and went, after about ten years' residence in upper floors, to a small house occupied entirely by himself, in No. 92 George Street, where he passed the next seventeen years.

During the summer of 1810 he was very unwell; for which he roamed for nearly two months over England and Wales.

In the spring of 1811 he was in London, and saw more of its society than he had yet done. In the autumn he took another journey to the north of Scotland.

His professional employment was now widening so steadily, as to make it evident that, if he persevered, the pinnacles of the law were not beyond his reach. I wish it was possible for me to do justice to the more eminent competitors with whom he had the satisfaction and the honour to be engaged. But they are too numerous, and, except as lawyers, many of them are too unknown, to be generally interesting. There are three, however, of his principal rivals who cannot be passed by.

Clerk of Eldin.

John Clerk, son of Clerk of Eldin (a man whose science and originality, whether he first propounded the modern system of naval tactics or not, were far above that idea) had been Solicitor-General under the Whig Government of 1805 and 1806, and had since risen into great practice. It is difficult to describe a person whose conditions in repose and in action—that is, in his private and in his professional life—almost amounted to the possession of two natures.

A contracted limb, which made him pitch when he walked, and only admitted of his standing erect by hanging it in the air, added to the peculiarity of

a figure with which so many other ideas of oddity were connected. Blue eyes, very bushy eyebrows, coarse grizzly hair always in disorder, and firm, projecting features, made his face and head not unlike that of a thorough-bred shaggy terrier. It was a countenance of great thought and great decision.

Had his judgment been equal to his talent, few powerful men could have stood before him. For he had a strong, working, independent, ready head; which had been improved by various learning, extending beyond his profession into the fields of general literature, and into the arts of painting and sculpture. Honest, warm-hearted, generous, and simple, he was a steady friend, and of the most touching affection in all the domestic relations. The whole family was deeply marked by an hereditary caustic humour, and none of its members more than he.

These excellences, however, were affected by certain peculiarities, or habits, which segregated him from the whole human race.

One of these was an innocent admiration both of his own real merits and achievements, and of all the supposed ones which his simplicity ascribed to himself. He was saved from the imputation of vanity in this, by the sincerity of the delusion. Without any boasting or airs of superiority, he would expatiate on his own virtues with a quiet placidity, as if he had no concern in the matter, but only wished others to know what they should admire. This infantine self-deification would have been more amusing, had it not encouraged another

propensity, the source of some of his more serious defects—an addiction, not in words merely, but in conduct, to paradox. He did not announce his dogmas, like the ordinary professors of paradox, for surprise or argument, but used to insist upon them with a calm, slow, dogged obstinacy, which at least justified the honesty of his acting upon them. And this tendency was aggravated, in its turn, by a third rather painful weakness; which, of all the parts in his character, was the one which his friends would have liked most to change,—jealousy of rivalship, and a kindred impatience of contradiction. This introduced the next stage, when confidence in his own infallibility ascribed all opposition to doubts of his possessing this quality, and thus inflamed a spirit which, however serene when torpid, was never trained to submission, and could rise into fierceness when chafed.

Of course it was chafed every moment at the bar; and accordingly it was there that his other and inferior nature appeared. Every consideration was lost in eagerness for the client, whose merit lay in this, that he has relied upon me, John Clerk. Nor was his the common zeal of a counsel. It was a passion. He did not take his fee, plead the cause well, hear the result, and have done with it; but gave the client his temper, his perspiration, his nights, his reason, his whole body and soul, and very often the fee to boot. His real superiority lay in his legal learning and his hard reasoning. But he would have been despicable in his own sight had he reasoned without defying and insulting the

adversary and the unfavourable judges; the last of whom he always felt under a special call to abuse, because they were not merely obstructing justice, but thwarting him. So that pugnacity was his line. His whole session was one keen and truceless conflict; in which more irritating matter was introduced than could have been ventured upon by any one except himself, whose worth was known, and whose intensity was laughed at as one of the shows of the court.

Neither in speaking, nor in anything else, was he at all entangled with the graces; but his manner was always sensible and natural. An utterance as slow as minute guns, and a poor diction, marked his unexcited state, in one of his torpid moods. But when roused, which was his more common condition, he had the command of a strong, abrupt, colloquial style, which, either for argument or for scorn, suited him much better than any other sort of eloquence would have done. Very unequal, no distinguished counsel made so many bad appearances. But then he made many admirable ones, and always redeemed himself out of the bad ones by displays of great depth and ability. And his sudden rallies, when, after being refuted and run down, he stood at bay, and either covered his escape or died scalping, were unmatched in dexterity and force. A number of admirably written arguments, on profound legal difficulties, will sustain his reputation in the sight of every lawyer who will take the very useful trouble of instructing himself by the study of these works. It was his zeal, however, which of all low

qualities is unfortunately the one that is most prized in the daily market of the bar, that chiefly upheld him when in his glory; and as this fiery quality must cool with age, he declined some years before he withdrew.

His popularity was increased by his oddities. Even in the midst of his frenzies he was always introducing some original and quaint humour; so that there are few of the lights of the court of whom more sayings and stories are prevalent. Even in his highest fits of disdainful vehemence, he would pause,—lift his spectacles to his brow,—erect himself,—and after indicating his approach by a mantling smile, would relieve himself, and cheer the audience, by some diverting piece of Clerkism,—and then, before the laugh was well over, another gust would be up. He, and his consulting room, withdrew the attention of strangers from the cases on which they had come to hear their fate. Walls covered with books and pictures, of both of which he had a large collection; the floor encumbered by little ill-placed tables, each with a piece of old china on it; strange boxes, bits of sculpture, curious screens and chairs, cats and dogs (his special favourites), and all manner of trash, dead and living, and all in confusion;—John himself sitting in the midst of this museum,—in a red worsted night cap, his crippled limb resting horizontally on a tripod stool,—and many pairs of spectacles and antique snuff-boxes on a small table at his right hand; and there he sits,—perhaps dreaming awake,—probably descanting on some of his crotchets, and

certainly abusing his friends the judges,—when recalled to the business in hand; but generally giving acute and vigorous advice.

Except in his profession, and as an ardent partizan, he was little of a public character. Resolute in his Whig principles, which he delighted to shake in the face of his adversaries during the fulness of their power, and entering hotly into all the movements of his party, inexperience of public management, and some impracticability, disqualified him from originating measures, and occasionally made him a little dangerous even as their defender. In these matters, indeed, his friends could not have the confidence in his judgment which friends would have liked to have had in one so upright, and with so muscular a mind.

Jeffrey and he did excellently together; for even in opposition Jeffrey managed him better than most other people could. He respected his worth and talent; and whenever Clerk exceeded his allowed (and pretty large) measure of provocation, no one could so easily torment him to return, chiefly by the levity with which Clerk's coarser blows were received.

JAMES MONCREIFF.

James Moncreiff, a son of Sir Harry, and worthy of the name, was more remarkable for the force, than for the variety, of his powers. His faculties, naturally, could have raised and sustained him in almost any practical sphere. But, from his very outset, he devoted himself to the law as the great object of his ambition. The politics of the Scotch

Whig party, and the affairs of that Presbyterian Church which he revered, occupied much of his attention throughout life; but even these were subordinate to the main end of rising, by hard work, in his profession.

This restriction of his object had its necessary consequences. Though excellently educated at Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Oxford, he left himself little leisure for literary culture; and while grounded in the knowledge necessary for the profession of a liberal lawyer, he was not a well-read man. Without any of his father's dignified air, his outward appearance was rather insignificant; but his countenance was marked by a pair of firm, compressed lips, denoting great vigour and resolution. The peculiarity of his voice always attracted attention. In its ordinary state it was shrill and harsh; and casual listeners, who only heard it in that state, went away with the idea that it was never anything else. They never heard him admonish a prisoner, of whom there was still hope; or doom one to die; or spurn a base sentiment; or protest before a great audience on behalf of a sacred principle. The organ changed into striking impressiveness, whenever it had to convey the deep tones of that solemn earnestness which was his eloquence. Always simple, direct, and practical, he had little need of imagination; and one so engrossed by severe occupation and grave thought could not be expected to give much to general society by lively conversation. With his private friends he was always cheerful and innocently happy.

In the midst of these negative qualities, there were three positive ones which made him an admirable and very formidable person:—great power of reasoning,—unconquerable energy,—and the habitual and conscientious practice of all the respectable, and all the amiable virtues.

Though a good thinker, not quick, but sound, he was a still better arguer. His reasoning powers, especially as they were chiefly seen concentrated on law, were of the very highest order. These, and his great legal knowledge, made him the best working counsel in court. The intensity of his energy arose from that of his conscientiousness. Everything was a matter of duty with him, and therefore he gave his whole soul to it. Jeffrey called him the whole duty of man. Simple, indifferent, and passive, when unyoked, give him anything professional or public to perform, and he fell upon it with a fervour which made his adversaries tremble, and his friends doubt if it was the same man. One of his cures for a headache was to sit down and clear up a deep legal question. With none, originally, of the facilities of speaking which seem a part of some men's nature, zeal, practice, and the constant possession of good matter, gave him all the oratory that he required. He could in words unravel any argument, however abstruse, or disentangle any facts, however complicated, or impress any audience with the simple and serious emotions with which he dealt. And, for his purpose, his style both written and spoken was excellent—plain, clear, condensed, and nervous.

Thus, the defect lay in the narrowness of the range; the merit in his force within it. Had it not been for his known honesty, his inflexible constancy of principle, and the impossibility of his doing anything without stamping the act with the impression of his own character, he would have been too professional for public life. But zeal and purity are the best grounds of public influence; and accordingly, in Edinburgh, or wherever he was known, the mere presence of James Moncreiff satisfied people that all was right.

I am not aware how his moral nature could have been improved. A truer friend, a more upright judge, or a more affectionate man, could not be.

His love of the church was not solely hereditary. He himself had a strong Presbyterian taste, and accordingly both the Whiggism and the grave piety of what was called the *wild* side of the church, were entirely according to his heart. He was almost the only layman on that side, who used regularly to attend to the proceedings of the old General Assembly, and to influence them. It was a sad day for him when he thought it his duty to renounce that community, as he was certain that his father would have done; and to adhere to what he thought its ancient and genuine principles in the Free Church. He mourned over the necessity with the sorrow of a mother weeping for a dead child.

His attachment to his political principles was equally steady and pure. He owned them in his youth, and they clung to him through life. The

public meeting in 1795, for attending which Henry Erskine was turned out of the deanship, was held in the Circus, which their inexperience at that time of such assemblages had made them neglect to take any means to light, and Erskine was obliged to begin his speech in the dark. A lad, however, struggled through the crowd with a dirty tallow candle in his hand, which he held up, during the rest of the address, before the orator's face. Many shouts honoured the unknown torch-bearer. This lad was James Moncreiff, then about sixteen. The next time that he recollected being in that place, which had changed its name, was when he presided at what is known here as the Pantheon Meeting in 1819. He died in the political faith in which he had lived; never selfish, or vindictive, or personal; never keeping back, but never pushing forward; and always honouring his party and his cause by the honesty and resolute moderation of all his sentiments.

Jeffrey had the greatest regard for this most excellent man. On the 22d of November 1826, Moncreiff was raised by his brethren of the bar to be their Dean. Some thought that Jeffrey, who, besides other things, was his senior, had a better claim. But he put this down peremptorily, insisting that Moncreiff held, and deserved to hold, a higher professional position; and declaring that, at any rate, he would have more gratification in his friend's elevation than in his own. He accordingly seconded Moncreiff's nomination. Many a *tough* bar battle had they. But this only tightened the

bands of their social lives. In their judicial conflicts, Moncreiff had the advantage in hard law, Jeffrey in general reasoning and in legal fancy. He died on the 30th of March 1851.

George Cranstoun.

George Cranstoun, with rather a featureless countenance, had a pleasing and classical profile. With a deadly paleness, a general delicacy of form, and gentlemanlike, though not easy, manners, the general air indicated elegance, thought, and restraint. His knowledge of law was profound, accurate, and extensive; superior perhaps, especially if due value be set on its variety, to that of every other person in his day. It embraced every branch of the science, feudal, mercantile, and Roman; constitutional and criminal; the system not of his own country alone, but, in its more general principles, the jurisprudence of Europe. No great, though new, question could occur, on which he was not, or could not soon make himself, at home. His legal loins were always girt up; and his law was dignified by a respectable acquaintance with classical and continental literature, and a very considerable knowledge of the literature of Britain. Except two or three casual (and rather elaborate) levities, he wrote nothing but the legal arguments in which the court was then so much addressed. His style in this line was so clear and elegant, that there can be no doubt that it would have sustained higher matter. His speaking was anxiously precise; while ingenious law, beautiful reasoning, and measured diction, gave every profes-

sional speech, however insignificant the subject, the appearance of a finished thing. It was not his way to escape from details by general views. He built up his own argument, and demolished that of his adversary, stone by stone. There are few in whose hands this system could have avoided being tedious. But he managed it with such brevity in each part, and such general neatness and dexterity, that of all faults tediousness was the one of which he was freest. He could not be forcible, and was too artificial to be moving, and therefore avoided the scenes where these qualities are convenient. His appropriate line was that of pure law, set off by elegance, reasoning, and learning. His taste was delicate, but not always sound, particularly on matters of humour, which his elaboration seldom gave fair play. He no doubt felt the humour of others, and had humorous conceptions of his own. But when he tried to give one of them to the public, the preamble and the point were so anxiously conned and polished that the principal pleasure of the audience, when they saw the joke on the stocks, consisted in their watching the ingenious care with which it was to be launched.

The defect of the whole composition was a want of nature. To a very few of the kernels of his friendships he was reported to be not incapable of relapsing into ease. But those less favoured, and his general acquaintance, were oppressed by his systematic ceremony. He shrunk so into himself, that those who did not understand the thing were apt to suppose him timid and indifferent to common

distractions. But he was exactly the reverse. His opinions and feelings, both of persons and of matters, were decided and confident; in forming them he was entirely free from the errors that spring from undue admiration or enthusiasm; and behind a select screen they were sometimes freely disclosed. But the very next moment, if before the world, the habitual mask, which showed nothing but diffidence and fastidious retirement, was never off. He would have been far more powerful and popular, could he have been but artless. His exposition of law was matchless; and he sometimes touched the right moral chord, but not always on the right key. The disposition to get into the region of exquisite art; to embellish by an apt quotation; to explain by an anecdote; to drop his distinctly uttered and polished words, one by one, like pearls, into the ear, —adhered to him too inseparably.

Though a decided Whig, for which he suffered professional proscription for several years, it was chiefly by his character that he did good to his party. Retired habits and the unfortunate ambition of perfection, excluded his practical usefulness. With no indecision of principle, and no public indifference, though with considerable distaste of popular vulgarity, it was beneath George Cranstoun ever to come forward but on a great occasion, and with a display of precise, unchallengeable excellence. This was not the man for plain public work, and accordingly he very rarely undertook it.

His and Jeffrey's professional struggles were often very amusing. He undervalued what he thought

Jeffrey's ignorance of correct law; Jeffrey made game of the technical accuracy of his learned brother. A black-letter judge agreed with the one; the world admired the other. Each occasionally tried the other's field. But in these encroachments the advantage was generally on the side of Jeffrey; who, with due preparation, could more certainly equal the law of Cranstoun, than Cranstoun could the ingenuity or the brilliant illustration of Jeffrey. The one was in books; the other in the man.

About the close of 1810, Mons. Simond, a French gentleman, who had left his country early in the revolution, came with his wife and a niece to visit some friends in Edinburgh, where they remained some weeks. Mad. Simond was a sister of Charles Wilkes, Esq., banker in New York, a nephew of the famous John; and the niece was Miss Charlotte Wilkes, a daughter of this Charles. It was during this visit, I believe, that she and Jeffrey first met.

In 1812 he became the tenant of Hatton, about nine miles west of Edinburgh, where he passed the summer of that and of the two succeeding years. The Moreheads and their family lived with him there in 1812 and 1813. It had formerly been a seat of the Lauderdales, by whom the mansion had been built, and the grounds laid out, prior to the close of the seventeenth century. In its original condition,—with its shaded avenues, its terraces, fountains, garden sculpture, shrubs, and its lawns,—it must have been a stately and luxurious place. But by 1812, time and neglect had made great changes. The house was still habitable, for a family

disposed to be contented; and the gardens retained the charms which can scarcely be taken from grounds brightened by healthy evergreens. The balustrades, however, were broken; the urns half buried; the fountains had ceased to play; and there was such general decay and disorder, that one of the interests consisted in fancying how well it must have looked when it was all entire.

This was the first country residence that Jeffrey ever had of his own. He enjoyed it exceedingly. It was the beginning of that half town and half villa life, which he ever afterwards led. He kept no carriage then of any kind; but rode out as often as he could; which, during the vacations of the court, was every day; and, besides ordinary visitors, no Saturday could pass without a special party of his friends. But his best happiness at Hatton arose from its quiet, and the opportunities it gave him of making the Moreheads happy, and of prattling with the children.

One of his fancies for several years, both before and after this, was to run for a few days to some wild solitude, in the very depth of winter. "I am (to Horner, 5th January 1813) just returned from the top of Ben-Lomond, where I had two shots at an eagle on New Year's Day. Is not that magnificent? and far better than special pleading, or even electioneering, which I hope was your employment about the same time. The weather was beautiful, only not quite wintry enough for my project of getting a peep of a true Alpine scene, or rather, to confess the truth, a living image of St. Preux's frozen

haunts at Meillerie. I have not done with Rousseau yet, you see, and find infinite consolation in him in all seasons. I cannot say that I feel my taste for business and affairs increase at all as I grow older; and therefore I suppose it is that I retain almost all my youthful interest in other occupations."

VISIT TO AMERICA.

His acquaintance with Miss Wilkes had ripened into a permanent attachment, which it was at one time thought would have ended in a marriage in England. Her father was an Englishman, but had been several years resident in America; and when his daughter was here, there was a scheme of their all returning to settle in this country. This plan had been given up, however, and the bride being established again on the other side of the Atlantic, it became necessary that he should earn her by going there. Accordingly, in spring 1813 he actually resolved to do so; which may be considered as one of the greatest achievements of love. For of all strong-minded men, there never was one who, from what he deemed a just estimate of its dangers, but in truth from mere nervous horror, recoiled with such sincerity from all watery adventures. No matter whether it was a sea that was to be crossed, or a lake, or a stream, or a pond. It was enough that he had to be afloat. The discomforts of a voyage to America in 1813, before steam had shortened the way, and relieved it by every luxury enjoyable by a landsman at sea, were very great. To these were added the more material

dangers connected with the war then subsisting between the two countries, and the almost personal passions under which it was conducted. But to him all these risks, including even that of detention, were immaterial. The sad fact was, that the Atlantic was not made of solid land.

However, his mind being made up, he set about it resolutely. His clients were left to their fate; the Review to Thomson and Murray, with promises of articles from some of its best contributors; and a will was deposited with George Joseph Bell, which conveyed all that he had to trustees for certain purposes. The trustees were four relations—"and my excellent friends Geo. J. Bell, John A. Murray, James Campbell, James Keay, and Robert Græme." He desired them "to take and give to each of my trustees one or two dozen of claret from my cellar—and also a book, or picture, or piece of furniture—to drink and to keep in memory of me." Of these five, Mr. Murray and Mr. Bell have been already mentioned. Mr. Campbell (now of Craigie) and Mr. Græme (now of Redgorton) continued to be his excellent friends to the end of his life. So did Mr. Keay, till he died in 1837—a person of great worth and judgment, and who had risen to a high station at the bar.

Having armed himself with all the official papers that could be got, and as many private recommendations as he chose, he and his brother went to Liverpool (May 1813) to find a ship. He was detained there a long while. But this showed him all the celebrated men of that place; among

others Roscoe, with whom he does not appear to have been struck. He returned to Edinburgh in July; and at last, after many obstacles, set sail on the 29th of August in a cartel, "the ship full of visitors, and a monstrous music of cheering mariners, squeaking pigs, and crying children."

Of course he kept a journal.

The sea does not begin to be abused till the third day, when it is thus dealt with:—"No land in sight, and none expected till we see America. It is amazing how narrow and paltry the boundless sea looks when there are no high shores in sight to mark its boundaries. I should think the eye does not reach more than seven miles of the surface at any time. To day it seems not much larger than a Spanish dollar, and much of that complexion. Not a sail or any vestige of man since the ship-of-war left us. Man, indeed, has left no traces of himself on the watery part of the globe. He has stripped the land of its wood, and clothed it with corn and with cities; he has changed its colour, its inhabitants, and all its qualities. Over it he seems, indeed, to have dominion, but the sea is as wild and unsubdued as on the first day of its creation. No track left of the innumerable voyagers who have traversed it; no power over its movements, or over the winds by which they are influenced. It is just as desert and unaltered in all particulars as before its bed was created; and would be, after his race was extinct. Neither time nor art make any alteration here. Continents are worn down and consolidated, and the forests grow up or rot into bog, by

the mere lapse of ages; but the great expanses of the ocean continue with the same surface and the same aspect for ever, and are, in this respect, the most perfect specimen of antiquity, and carry back the imagination the farthest into the dark abysses of time passed away."

The experience of the first eleven days enabled him to understand the charms of a voyage, which are thus summed up:—"Wednesday, 8th Sept., eight o'clock P.M.—For these last seven days I have not been able to write for violent gales and violent sea-sickness, head-winds, and swimming head, the whole time almost; fierce south-west gales, which, with eternal motion and clamour, have not advanced us 200 miles on our course, and have given me a great idea of the pleasures of a voyage.—*Imprimis*, Oppressive and intolerable sickness, coldness, loathing and vertigo. *Secundo*, Great occasional fear of drowning, and penitence for the folly of having come voluntarily in the way of it. *Tertio*, There is the impossibility of taking any exercise, and the perpetual danger of breaking your limbs if you try to move from your chair to your bed, or even to sit still without holding. *Quarto*, An incessant and tremendous noise of the ship groaning and creaking, cracking and rattling; to say nothing of the hissing of the wind, and the boiling and bubbling of the sea. *Quinto*, The eternal contact of the whole crew, whom you hear, see, feel, and smell, by day and by night, without respite or possibility of escape; crying children, chattering Frenchmen, prosing captain, and foolish women, all with you for ever, and no

means of getting out of their hearing. *Sexto*, The provoking uncertainty of your fate, now going 150 miles in one day on your way, and then taking seven days to 100; the agreeable doubt whether your voyage is to last three weeks or three months. *Septimo*, The horrid cooking, and the disgusting good appetites of those who are used to it. *Octavo*, The uniformity and narrowness of your view, and its great ugliness. There might be twenty more items, but these are enough; and in consideration of these alone, I think I shall make a covenant with myself, that if I get back safe to my own place from this expedition, I shall never willingly go out of sight of land again in my life. There is nothing so ugly or mean as the sea in roughish weather. The circuit very narrow, the elevations paltry, and all the forms ungraceful and ignoble. It looks like a nasty field deformed with heaps of rubbish, half shovelled and half frozen; and then the total want of vegetable odour, or variety, or any local association, makes it still more uninteresting. The sunsets are sometimes magnificent, but rather gloomy and terrible; deep recesses of glowing pillars, and awful prison gates of red-hot clouds, with sunbeams issuing from their cavities, and spreading an angry and awful light on the waters."

However, he was sometimes consoled by a capacity of vulgar enjoyment. "We killed a pig last night, and made mock-turtle soup of his head today. Miss —— makes us excellent puddings and pies every day, and if my sickness keeps off, I am in danger of getting a habit of gormandising."

"I have lived (he says on the 10th of September) so constantly with people I loved, and had full and cordial intimacy with, that it is always quite overwhelming to me to be left, for any length of time, with those to whom I can feel neither familiarity nor affection. I have endeavoured to cure this feeling by almost entirely occupying myself with recollections and anticipations, and giving such dimensions to the past and future, as to make the present of little importance. This exercise of the imagination is very delightful, though a little wearing out; but if the weather continue fine, I shall get on very well with it."

And so he does, for there follows this picture of a day at Hatton:—"Now they are shooting partridges amidst the singing reapers, and by the side of inland brooks in Scotland; and the leaves are growing brown on my Hatton beeches, and the uplands are purple in their heath, and the air is full of fragrant smell, and the voices of birds; and Tuckey's* eyes are glittering wild with joy, and every hour is bringing some new face and some new thing to the happy dwellers in those accessible scenes. While here, there is the eternal barrenness of the water, and the hissing of the winds, and the same unvarying band of fellow prisoners, and eternal longing for a termination that is altogether uncertain. But it will come in some shape or other."

And a Sunday there is thus recalled:—"Sunday, 12th, two o'clock.—Calm, calm, oppressively and relentlessly calm, since seven o'clock this morning,

* *Tuckey* was his nickname for one of Morehead's little girls.

and likely enough, from all appearances, to continue so. An enchanting day, too, if we could be on shore; warm, still, and glorious, with bright frothy clouds, and sighing airs; enough to rustle leaves and fan the brows of fatigue; but here only flapping our sails and spreading the nauseous smell of our pork boiling all over the ship. There is nothing so sweet to my imagination as a bright calm Sunday in the early part of autumn; gilding with its temperate splendour the yellow fields and holy spires, and carrying, on its still and silent air, the soothing sounds that fall and expire in that mild pause of labour; lowing oxen, bleating sheep, and crowing cocks, heard from farm to farm, through the clear air; and even the wood pigeons and roosting crows resounding through far groves; and the distant tinkling of bells, and the slow groups wandering from church, and the aspect of peace, and plenty, and reflection, that meets the eye on all sides. At sea, however, there is nothing but a wearisome glare, and a sickening heave of the water, and fretting, and gloom, and impatience."

The next Sunday revives similar associations. "Sunday, 19th September, eight o'clock.—I have been thinking all day of my sweet leisure autumn Sundays at Hatton last year; my early walks in the calm sunshine of the morning; my grey stairs, with the dewy flowers beside me; and Tuckey's cherub voice and glittering eyes; my languid reading, and careless talking all the morning; my little contemplative trot before dinner; our airy tea-drinkings, with the open windows, and the swallows skimming

past them; our long twilight social walks; Tuckey's undressing, prayers, and slumbers; my butter-milk potations, quiet bed-readings, and gazing on the soft moon that shone in upon my slumbers through the ever open windows. What a contrast my three last Sundays have afforded to this simple but happy life! To console myself, I am obliged to look forward to New York, and make a rival picture of peace and love there. Fancy, though, is less tranquil and sure in her work than memory."

The twenty-third day appears to have been a heavy one. But he seems to set this down partly to the "indefinite delay of all that is most interesting in existence,"—which, I suppose, means the bridegroom's impatience. "Monday, 20th Sept., eight o'clock.—Another weary melancholy day; not very heroically borne. Calm, dead oppressive calm, almost without intermission from this time last night till now. Two lovely evenings too; and the day so balmy, bland, and tranquil, as ought to have made it a pleasure to exist merely. But it was not; for I languished so for the scenes where it would have been a pleasure, and felt such impatience to reach that end of the tedious way, that I have been substantially wretched and shamefully low. If I thought it could have done me any good, I could with great good will have crept into a corner and cried. The sky was beautiful. A light varied dome of grey clouds resting on a zone of brighter silver, all wrought over like embossed silver, with a raised pattern of darker clouds; and the sea shining below like a vast pavement, or a molten sea in the temple of Solomon. This

evening, again, the sunset was magnificent, when he descended from the more solid canopy, and looked through the horizontal rim; and then, after he went down, the stars shone out with such dewy softness and summer sweetness, and the south wind breathed so low and gently, that I almost fancied that I could smell the orange and myrtle groves of the Western Islands (they are not above 200 miles off I take it), and hear their piping shepherds, and goats bleating on their twilight rocks. The picture of Hatton, though, and my sweet summer evenings in those less romantic shades, soon spoiled that picture, and my usual regret and impatience returned."

The only thing like a gale that relieved their monotony was too slight to raise his respect for the ocean. "Tuesday, 21st Sept., Evening.—We have had a real gale of wind to-day, for the first time, and it has neither made me sick nor terrified me. Moreover, it has carried us, I dare say, 130 miles on our course, and done us more good than all the winds and calms of the last five days. It began about three this morning, and waked us all before daybreak. Notwithstanding the splashing of the spray, I spent several hours on deck, and never saw an uglier scene; and what is worse, ugly, I think, without being sublime or terrible. I fancy, however, I have a spite at the sea, for I cannot bring myself to think or speak of it without a certain contempt, as well as dislike. The sky was very dark, and the water blue black, with a little foam, and many broad spots of dirty green, where the swell had recently broke. For the mountain waves one reads about in descriptions, they

seemed to me very poor paltry little slopes, not more than twenty feet high, by about three times as much in breadth, tossing very irregularly, and all wrinkled or covered over their convexity in the direction of the gale. The only things that had a sort of dreary magnificence, were some black-looking birds screaming through the mist, and a sort of smoking spray which the wind swept from the water, and kept hanging like a vapour all over its surface. We went very easily through this sea at the rate of better than seven miles an hour. If I had been in a little boat, or a crazy old ship, I daresay I should have been terrified; but as it was, the spectacle seemed to me very contemptible and paltry."

But on the 23d—"The sunset was most superb, from the astonishing variety of shades and colours. The sky was cloudy all round; at least four different layers of clouds, all broken, and seen behind each other in different tints and degrees of glory, kindling and curling in the finest groups and perspective. At different moments, and at different quarters, I am sure it might have furnished a painter with a hundred skies, every one singularly rich and beautiful. A panorama of it, with the black flat sea, brightened in various tints beneath, would have made a splendid exhibition."

They caught cod on the 26th, off Newfoundland; "huge victims, who seemed of a bulk worthy of the ocean." "There was something grand indeed, though very dreary, in watching the irregular heaves of the misty billows under the dark and heavy sky, and the wheeling of the innumerable birds that hovered in

our wake to pick up the offal that our butchery threw overboard. This set some of the men upon a new sport, which it seems is common in these regions. They fastened a bit of fat upon a small hook, and let it float astern. The birds darted after it in crowds, and tore it from each other with clamour, till the hook fastened on one more voracious than the rest. They very soon caught four or five in this way; but as they confessed they were good for nothing, we persuaded them to give up that cruel pastime. The quickness of sight in these creatures is astonishing. Yesterday we threw out little bits of grease, not larger than a bean, and repeatedly saw them check and pounce upon it from a distance of many hundred yards. Their agility, and the force and ease of their motions, are beautiful; and I amused myself for a long time in watching them skim close along the smooth and misty water, now dipping one end of their long wings, and now the other, now soaring aloft, and then diving for a long time out of sight under water, and rising and cackling with joy and loquacity."

The 4th of October was the joyous day. "Land ho! such was the joyful cry that startled us about one o'clock from the mast head, and immediately we were all on the rigging to gaze at it. In a few minutes, however, it was plain enough from the deck; stretching like a long, low, dark cloud along the bright edge of the horizon. It was then about ten miles off, but we neared it very fast, and soon distinguished woody hills, and coloured fields beneath, and a bright zone of white sand or gravel binding all the shore; and various villages and human dwellings

scattered along the beach. Columbus himself could not be more delighted than I was at this discovery; and the sight of stationary dwellings sending up quiet smoke among the trees, and the spires of rustic churches, and deep brown shades, and all the common traces of human habitation and rustic life, came like a glimpse of paradise upon my famished eyes, and gave me a sense of refreshment and joy that I have not known since I left *Scotland.* The day was lovely and unclouded, and the appearance, however distant, of comfort and secure life, peasants eating apples and new bread, and drinking new milk under their own trees, appeared to me like the summit of human felicity. Unfortunately, however, we were indulged but with a very transient glimpse of those beauties."

They were not only not allowed to land at once, but for two or three days were in danger of being ordered to repair to a place about 500 miles off. However, after much alarm and negotiation, the voyage, in so far as he was concerned, was brought to a close, on its fortieth day. He and his brother were set ashore early on the morning of the 7th October; and that day "we made our way to Mr. Wilkes', where I found the object of this tedious navigation."

He continued in America till the 22d of January 1814. In November, after his marriage, he visited a few of the principal cities of the Union. But his journal, though minute, records nothing, even in his favourite lines of reflection and speculation, that would now interest others. He appears to have

seen many important people, and to have been very kindly received. He had two curious interviews, one with Mr. Munroe the Secretary, and one with Mr. Maddison the President; of which he gives a very striking account. He had a power of reporting what he heard, whether speeches or conversations, more fully and accurately than almost any other person trusting to memory alone. A conversation reported by Jeffrey, where he spoke confidently, was, in its substance, fully as correct, and nearly as fresh, as the original.

He had gone to the Secretary to learn whether there was any hope of his obtaining a cartel for his return to Britain. After being promised every possible accommodation, the conversation was drawn on by Mr. Munroe to the war, its provocations, principles, and probable results; and particularly to the right claimed by England of searching American vessels for the recovery of British subjects. These were matters with which Jeffrey was probably as familiar as even the able and official person with whom he was talking; because the rights of neutrals had been more than once discussed in the Review, and in at least one article by Jeffrey himself; and, in so far as the right of searching *ships of war* for British deserters or subjects was involved, the principles there maintained were strongly against the English claim. But though not satisfied of the existence of the right claimed, he seems to have thought that it would be paltry not to stand by his country, before an enemy who had him in his power. Accordingly, he took the side of Britain during an

animated, though politely conducted, argument, which, after lasting a long time one day, was renewed the next.

After this, but on the same day (18th November 1813), he had the honour of dining with the President, when he had another discussion with him. By the advice of the Secretary, he took occasion, when he was about to retire, to thank his Excellency for the indulgence he had met with in the matter of the cartel. "This was received in a composed, civil way; and then his Excellency proceeded to say that it was the wish of his government to set an example of the utmost liberality in everything, and to prove to the world that nothing but absolûte necessity should ever induce them to adopt those principles of warfare which had been directed against them. I said I trusted the English nation stood in need of no lessons in these particulars, and that in her present unfortunate hostilities with America, would show the same spirit of generosity which had distinguished even her most impolitic wars. He took up this a little warmly, and said that the way in which she had attacked the defenceless villages, threatened the citizens with the fate of traitors, and broken off the agreements entered into by their own agents as to the exchange of prisoners, did not say much for their spirit of generosity, and that the very pretence in which the war originated, the obstinacy and insolence with which all satisfaction had been refused, and the extraordinary form in which negotiation was ultimately offered, could leave little doubt on any impartial mind as to the temper by

which it was carried on on the part of England. I was a little surprised at this sort of challenge to discussion, thrown out by a sovereign to a private individual in his own drawing-room. I felt, however, that it was not my part to decline it; and being somewhat *au fait* of the matter by my discussion with the Secretary, I did not hesitate to accept. We entered accordingly upon a discussion which lasted nearly two hours, and embraced all the topics which I had gone over with Mr. M.; very nearly upon the same grounds, and to the same results; though maintained on the part of the President with rather more caution and reserve, more shyness as to concessions, and a tone considerably more acrimonious towards England; though perfectly civil, and even courteous to myself."

After repeating the substance of each of these conferences to Mr. Wilkes, as soon as they were over, and thus impressing it on his mind, he wrote it down, so that it is probably as correct and minute an account of these conversational discussions as it is possible ever to have. His defence of the general conduct of this country, both in the origin and in the conduct of the war, was manly and able; and, in so far as it depends on general reasoning, apart from the authority of jurists, who were not taken into council on either side, I doubt if the right of search was ever more powerfully maintained. Whatever the truth of the case may be, he had clearly the best of these arguments; though it be certain that those of his opponents do not suffer from his statement of them.

He left New York, on his homeward voyage, on the 22d of January 1814, and reached Liverpool on the tenth of February. "Once more on British ground, and done, I hope for ever, with nautical journals." "I return to you (he tells Mrs. Morehead, in a letter of the 9th of February, while still on ship-board) unchanged in everything, and if possible, still more tenderly attached to Scotland, and all it contains, than ever." To which he adds next day on his landing,—"Arrived once more on my own land." "Heaven bless you all,—and Tuckey above all, of whom you do not tell me one half enough. I am quite feverish with joy at feeling myself again so near you, and never to be parted so far again."

He was very speedily established at home, with its rekindled light of domestic love. It would be presumptuous and indelicate to make the lady he brought among us a subject of public description. I shall only say that almost the whole happiness of his future life flowed from this union; and that Mrs. Jeffrey uniformly showed that she deserved the affection with which she inspired all his friends. Alas! it is easy to utter these words! But how inadequate are they to recall, vividly, what they are meant to convey! The whole scene has passed away, and every hour weakens its impressions. The thirty-four years during which they were united have fled, and he and she are but remembered. Could we now feel over again the delights of a single day passed with them in the country, or of a single evening over their social fire, we would

then know, better than we could when it was familiar, the depth of the natural and cheerful happiness which she diffused round her husband and his friends.

In his first letter to Horner after reaching home, (3d May 1814) he expresses his regret that he cannot, like everybody else, run over and see France; because, though strongly tempted, he could not move so soon again. "In the meantime I intend to cultivate the domestic virtues, and all manner of plants and flowers. I grow every day more sick of the necessity of working; and have serious thoughts of going into a cottage and living on £300 a year. Only it is rather too little, and I should like to have the means of moving about a little." This makes a very good sentence in a letter; especially one addressed to a friend who was in no danger of being misled by it. But there was nothing less seriously in his mind at this time, even with a new wife, than retirement, and cottages, and £300 a year. He saw the bar now fairly open to him; and returned with increased alacrity to his professional, literary, and social pursuits.

When he had sailed for America, in August 1813, the issue of the invasion of Russia by France was uncertain; and his fears being far stronger than his hopes, he had gone away with the gloomiest views of public affairs. By the time that he returned, the invading host was dissipated, and the war was miraculously ended, amidst events, and after experiences, which seemed to promise permanent peace to the world. He was astonished and delighted, and gave

expression to his feelings in the very next article that he wrote for the Review, being that beautiful one on "*The State and Prospects of Europe*" (No. 45, art. 1); to which, lest his predictions of a millennium should be refuted by circumstances not then existing, he gave the special date of the 5th of May 1814. This was remarkable, he says, as the first occasion on which the Review and the whole public had ever been of one mind. "It would be strange indeed, we think, if pages, dedicated like ours to topics of present interest, and the discussions of the passing hour, should be ushered into the world at such a moment as this, without some stamp of that common joy and overwhelming emotion with which the wonderful events of the last three months are still filling all the regions of the earth. In such a situation it must be difficult for any one who has the means of being heard, to refrain from giving utterance to his sentiments. But to us, *whom it has assured, for the first time, of the entire sympathy of our countrymen*, the temptation we own is irresistible." And then he goes on to the most beautiful, and the most intelligent of all the many songs of triumph that poetry and oratory sang upon the novelty that had lightened every heart. "It had come upon the world like the balmy air and flushing verdure of a late spring, after the dreamy chills of a long and interminable winter; and the refreshing sweetness with which it has visited the earth, feels like Elysium to those who have just escaped from the driving tempests it has banished."

He had all along been too sincerely afraid of the

war not to rejoice in its termination, without troubling himself about the principles or the objects of the powers by the success of whose troops it had been ended. There were philosophers, and even patriots, who saw nothing in Napoleon's landing at Frejus except the acquiescence of a legitimately elected sovereign in a call by his subjects for his return from a state of compulsory banishment, to govern them; and in whose eyes the glory of Waterloo was dimmed by its being only a part of the scheme for imposing a government on France by the force of foreign arms. The Review was open to the discussion of all such ideas; but Jeffrey's own opinion was clear, that a continuation of the war, and of Napoleon's military despotism, were the greatest of all immediate evils, and that whatever ended both ought to gratify reasonable men. I cannot discover anything offensive in the Review about this time, either on this or on any other subject; but Mr. Horner seems to have condemned something which I suspect was connected with the Whigs and the allies, so strongly, as to have indicated an inclination to have no more to do with the work. This produced an admirable defence (12th March 1815) by Jeffrey, both of his own conduct, as editor, and of the principles on which any such work must necessarily be conducted. The letter is too long to be quoted here, but it is a sound and high-minded exposition, which cannot be read without admiration of his spirit and honour.*

Horner soon afterwards (2d June 1815) asked his

* See extracts from letters, end of volume.

opinion of the "new war," and blamed the allied attack on France. To this he received a plain answer, the substance of which was—"I am mortally afraid of the war, and I think that is all I can say about it. I hate Bonaparte, too, because he makes me more afraid than anybody else; and seems more immediately the cause of my paying income-tax, and having my friends killed by dysenteries and gunshot wounds, and making my country unpopular, brágging, and servile, and everything that I do not wish it to be. I do think, too, that the risk was and is far more imminent and tremendous of the subversion of all national independence, and all peaceful virtues, and mild and generous habits, by his insolent triumph, than by the success of the most absurd of those who are allied against him."

CRAIGCROOK.

He had left Hatton in the autumn of 1814, and in the spring of 1815 transferred his rural deities to Craigcrook, where he passed all his future summers. It is on the eastern slope of Corstorphine Hill, about three miles to the north-west of Edinburgh. When he first became the tenant, the house was only an old *keep*, respectable from age, but inconvenient for a family; and the ground was merely a bad kitchen garden, of about an acre, all in paltry disorder. He immediately set about reforming. Some ill-placed walls were removed; while others, left for shelter, were in due time loaded with gorgeous ivy, and both protected and adorned the garden. A useful, though

humble, addition was made to the house. And, by the help of neatness, sense, evergreens, and flowers, it was soon converted into a sweet and comfortable retreat. The house received a more important addition many years afterwards; but it was sufficient without this for all that his family and his hospitalities at first required. But by degrees that *earth-hunger* which the Scotch ascribe to the possession of any portion of the soil, came upon him, and he enlarged and improved all his appurtenances. Two sides of the mansion were flanked by handsome bits of evergreened lawn. Two or three western fields had their stone fences removed, and were thrown into one, which sloped upwards from the house to the hill, and was crowned by a beautiful bank of wood; and the whole place, which now extended to thirty or forty acres, was always in excellent keeping. Its two defects were, that it had no stream, and that the hill robbed the house of much of the sunset, Notwithstanding this, it was a most delightful spot; the best for his purposes that he could have found. The low ground, consisting of the house and its precincts, contained all that could be desired for secluded quiet, and for reasonable luxury. The high commanded magnificent and beautiful views, embracing some of the distant mountains in the shires of Perth and Stirling, the near inland sea of the Firth of Forth, Edinburgh and its associated heights, and the green and peaceful nest of Craigcrook itself.

During the thirty-four seasons that he passed there, what a scene of happiness was that spot! To his own household it was all that their hearts

desired. Mrs. Jeffrey knew the genealogy, and the personal history and character, of every shrub and flower it contained. It was the favourite resort of his friends, who knew no such enjoyment as Jeffrey at that place. And, with the exception of Abbotsford, there were more interesting strangers there than in any house in Scotland. Saturday, during the summer session of the courts, was always a day of festivity; chiefly, but by no means exclusively, for his friends at the bar, many of whom were under general invitations. Unlike some barbarous tribunals which feel no difference between the last and any other day of the week, but moil on with the same stupidity through them all, and would include Sunday if they could, our legal practitioners, like most of the other sons of bondage in Scotland, are liberated earlier on Saturday; and the Craigcrook party began to assemble about three, each taking to his own enjoyment. The bowling-green was sure to have its matches, in which the host joined with skill and keenness; the garden had its loiterers; the flowers, not forgetting the wall of glorious yellow roses, their worshippers; the hill its prospect-seekers. The banquet that followed was generous; the wines never spared, but rather too various; mirth unrestrained, except by propriety; the talk always good, but never ambitious; and mere listeners in no disrepute. What can efface these days, or indeed any Craigcrook day, from the recollection of those who had the happiness of enjoying them?*

* A fictitious person of the name of Morris (but who re-

Horner wrote to him recommending the Baconian gardening.* To which he answers (9th June 1815), "I intended to have been heretical in the other way, and to have accused you of affectation, for professing an admiration of Bacon's style of gardening. I am not for bold staring houses, and bare lawns, any more than you are. But really they are considerably more tolerable than a paltry wilderness of four square acres, or groves and arbours, 'or fair pillars of carpenters' work;' and the truth is, that you durst no more make such a horrid Dutch Lustfield, than you durst put on the quilted breeches and the high crowned hat of the great philosopher. However, come to Craigcrook, and debate the matter manfully."

In the autumn of this year (1815) he gratified his desire of seeing the Continent for the first time. The immediate temptation was, that he could have the company and the aid of Mons. Simond. Madame Simond remained with Mrs. Jeffrey at Craigcrook. In writing to Mr. Richardson for his passports (14th

presents a real man, and a powerful writer), and who, in *Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk*, published in 1819, professes to describe Edinburgh and its neighbourhood, mentions, as if he had seen it, a Craigcrook scene, where the whole party, including Mr. Playfair, who died in July 1819, aged seventy-one, took off their coats and had a leaping match. As the liveliness and individuality of Dr. Morris's descriptions have made some of the simple believe them to be all real, it may be as well to say that this is entirely a fancy piece. And, for so skilful a painter, it is not well fancied. It is totally unlike the Craigcrook proceedings, and utterly repugnant to all the habits of Mr. Playfair.

* See Horner's Memoirs, ii. 249.

September 1815)—"Can I do anything for you where I am going? I go, after all, with a heavy heart, and would rather stay at home. Nothing that I shall see abroad, I am sure, will give me half the pleasure of seeing my friends again upon my return; and it is quite refreshing to think that I may have a peep of so many of them at Hampstead,* as I pass through London."

Yet he was only away about a month; having reached Rotterdam from Harwich on the 24th of September, and returned to Dover on the 25th of October. He ran through Holland and Flanders, seeing the common sights of galleries and curious towns; and was above a fortnight in Paris. A full and minute journal details the proceedings of every day. These were interesting then, from the novelty of scenes that had been closed against the British traveller for nearly twenty-five years. But now that they are familiar to every one, there is no particular attraction in the statement of even Jeffrey's observations and impressions. To himself, at the time, it was their novelty that chiefly struck him; and he calls what he was writing a mere traveller's guide-book. Though lively and descriptive, it is not worth quoting. One of the few reflections that he makes was at Waterloo—"Half of the ground is now ploughed up; and except the broken trees and burnt offices at Hougomont, there is nothing to mark the scene of so much havoc and desolation. The people are ploughing and reaping, and old men following their old occupations, in their old fields, as

* Where Mr. Richardson then lived.

if 60,000 youths had not fallen to manure them within these six months. The tottering chimney-tops are standing, the glass unbroken in the windows, the roads and paths all winding as before, the grass as green, and the trees as fresh, as if this fiery deluge of war had not rolled over the spot on which they are standing. I picked up a bit of cloth and a piece of a bridle." He had got excellent introductions from Lord Holland and Sir James Mackintosh for Paris; where he accordingly saw a number of important people, and a good deal of Parisian society. But he records little memorable even for that day, and nothing that it would be worth while to repeat now. All the political feeling seems to have been concentrated into hatred of the Bourbons and the English, and utter uncertainty as to what would be the next act of France's protracted tragedy. In the long voyage from Boulogne to Dover, "The sea and the wind became both very high, particularly the former; a worse and more dangerous sea than is often seen in the open ocean, from the shortness and irregularity of the swell." He finishes by saying that he had examined all the wonders of Dover, and "have admired the modest and domestic look of the women—eaten roast beef, apple pie, and mutton chops—drank beer and port wine—and felt myself taking very kindly to all my old British habits and prejudices. The best use of going abroad, I take it, is to make one fond of home; a fondness on which virtue and happiness are both most securely built; and which one that does not leave home too early, can scarcely fail to increase

by such an experiment. Something is learnt too, I suppose, though probably of no great value. And things are pleasant to recollect, and to talk of at a distance, which were wearisome enough when they occurred. It was solely to enable me to recollect them, that I have put down this indistinct notice of them all."

A change took place in the beginning of next year, in the administration of justice in Scotland, which it was foreseen would be of importance to Jeffrey. It consisted of the introduction of juries for the trial of facts in civil causes, which was first practised on the 22d of January 1816. There were no juries here before this, except in Exchequer, and in criminal prosecutions. The practice in these courts was not extensive; but such as it was, he had had the best of it, at least before the criminal tribunal, for several years; and his success there suggested him as the counsel likely to be the most successful gleaner in the new field. This expectation was not disappointed. He instantly took up one side of almost every trial in what was then called the Jury Court, as if it had been a sort of right, and held this position as long as he was at the bar. "Tell me (says Horner, 2d June 1815) what is doing, or meant to be done, about your Jury Court. That will be a great field for you. The success of the new institution must, in a very great measure, depend on the exertions made by the bar." "And with so much of genius and philosophy as adorn the Parliament House at present, it will be imputable to your indolence only if

you do not give the thing a right impulse at first," etc.

Jeffrey was well fitted for the new sphere in every respect, though not perhaps without some deductions. His law, which was now recognised as sufficient for the deepest discussions before the judges, was far more than sufficient for any emergency likely to occur in a court, which, instead of getting whole causes to dispose of, had only to investigate certain detached matters of fact specified in previously adjusted issues. He had as great a familiarity with the rules and the philosophy of evidence as any one either at the bar or on the bench. Caution and distrust made him a safe adviser of his client; while no flaw in the case or in the reasoning of his adversary could escape his acuteness. Though superior to the ludicrous and miserable weakness, proceeding generally from professional selfishness, which drives some counsel to identify themselves with every client who employs them, and to fancy that truth and justice are always on their side, a sense of duty, and a natural energy of temperament, excited him to as much zeal as an honourable advocate ought to feel or to profess. Rarely misled by the temptation of a merely temporary triumph, his general management was judicious and prospective. In sagacity he had no superior. It was his peculiar quality. Through the usual dishonesty, misinformation, and prejudices, by which every advocate is liable to be misled, he felt, and could predict, what, either of principle or of assertion, would ultimately stand or would ultimately fail. Thus seeing, from the outset of the

voyage, all the rocks and shoals on which the ship was likely to strike, and all the gales that might favour or obstruct it—all the anchors that would hold, and all the harbours of refuge into which it might be run; his steerage was that of a first-rate legal pilot. He scented what would turn out nonsense or falsehood a great way off, and thus was the safest of all general advisers. It was not exactly acuteness or talent; it was a faculty which these qualities often obstruct. Sagacity—or, at least, the sort of sagacity which I mean to describe as belonging to him, consists, principally in the power of taking large and calm surveys with a view to detect strong or weak points. A person who, knowing him, had never seen him at this work, might have doubted his being effective with juries. He might have feared a manner still somewhat artificial, and a mind addicted to more refined reasoning than plain men might relish. Some of these misgivings would not have been unreasonable. There was, in truth, a want of plainness, directness, and shortness. But it adds greatly to the merit of his success, that he triumphed over even these defects. An invaluable memory for details enabled him to array, and to compare, any circumstances, however numerous or complicated;* and for whatever difficulty talent was required, he had it in every variety at command. Revelling in

* He had a fancy, or said that he had it, that though he went to bed with his head stuffed and confused with the names, and dates, and other details, of various causes, they were all in order in the morning; which he accounted for by saying, that during sleep "*they all crystallised round their proper centres.*"

the exuberance of his powers, he sometimes put the matter in too many lights; but he never failed to put it in some, or in one, from which no rusticity could escape. The plausibility with which his own sophistry was veiled was only equalled by the skill with which he exposed that of his opponent. If it was a case where humour was convenient, it gushed readily from a mind habitually practised in ingenious combination of ideas and resemblances, and so brilliant in illustration, that Southey thought this the peculiarity of his intellect. Was a grave or a lofty train of thought or of sentiment proper, who could rise to it more nobly than one who had only to yield to his own natural feelings? But there was another influence around him more honourable than any that mere talent could confer. The people were proud of the Review, of which they were aware that he was the spirit; and they knew that there was no scheme for their elevation which did not acknowledge him for its leader, or its most intelligent champion. Then they had always heard of him as amiable and generous; and when they saw him, and he began to do business with them, either gravely or playfully, they were the more disposed to admire the counsel from their personal love of the man.

I wish I could give some examples of his professional style. But it is impossible. Such displays can never be appreciated, or indeed understood, unless where the whole circumstances are fully reported; and even then they are of no value unless they be connected with public events. The life of an advocate is a life spent in the midst of occurrences

of the deepest interest to parties; but which, to others, vanishes with the passing hour. There is not a day in which talents are not exhibited in courts of justice equal to the highest that can operate in the most difficult employments in which the human mind can be engaged. The exercise of these talents saves or ruins families. It inflames able men with the fire of professional ambition. It agitates spectators according to various sympathies. If a great public principle or result be involved, such as history must transmit to posterity, what occurs keeps its interest; not as a judicial proceeding, but as a political event. If only private concerns be at issue, the whole affair, though marked by admirable displays of ability, is almost as little cared for after it is over, as the last theatrical exhibition of a great actor. What preserves the forensic glory of Thomas Erskine, except the State trials, which gave subjects of permanent dignity to his genius, and which, thus sustained, his genius made immortal? Few such occasions occur even in England, and far fewer in Scotland;—during Jeffrey's time, indeed, none; and those that possessed some temporary local importance are so imperfectly reported, that the published accounts would rather mislead than assist us in estimating his powers or his style.

The first application of juries to civil justice was entrusted to the Right Hon. William Adam of Blair-Adam, in Kinross-shire, who was put at the head of the new court; where, besides other qualities, he exhibited the best example of judicial urbanity that perhaps any Scotch court had till then

enjoyed. This led to an agreeable intercourse between him and Jeffrey. Jeffrey had kept up his Speculative Society friendship with William Adam, the son; but he now gained the esteem of the whole family; and speaks, in many of his letters, of his delightful visits to them, in all their branches, both at Blair-Adam and at their villa at Richmond.

In 1816 he wrote the article Beauty for the Encyclopædia Britannica. Of all the treatises that have been published on the theory of taste, it is the most complete in its philosophy, and the most delightful in its writing; and it is as sound as the subject admits of.

After the peace, by delivering the people from foreign alarm, had given them leisure to look into their domestic condition, the various questions of reform that have ever since engrossed their attention began successively to arise. Consistently with the principles and objects it had always adhered to, the Review engaged, with its usual animation, in all these discussions. But Jeffrey, though as enthusiastic a reformer as was consistent with prudence, made few personal contributions in this form to the cause. Public affairs indeed were generally the smallest of his departments, though in none, when he ventured into it, was his wisdom more conspicuous; but after this he cultivated the subject even more sparingly than he used to do. Between 1815 and 1820, inclusive, he seems to have only written one article directly on British politics. Nobody who lived in 1819 and 1820 can have forgotten the frightful condition of large portions of the population; when

demagogues aggravated the real miseries of want, by ascribing it to wilful human causes. It was the most horrid period since the days of 1793. Jeffrey's humanity would not allow him to avoid giving a few words of advice in such a crisis; and in October 1819 he wrote a short but excellent article on the state of the nation (No. 64, art. 2), containing an exposition to all parties of their errors, their duties, and their danger. His only other articles connected with even general politics were one on De Stael's French Revolution (September 1818), and one in May 1820, on the jealousies between America and Britain. This last was a subject to which he was never indifferent. He had constantly endeavoured to remove the irritations which made these two kindred nations think so uncharitably and so absurdly of each other. This article contains an examination of the grounds on which this want of candour is charged by the author of the book he is criticising as solely on the side of the British, and an earnest appeal to the good sense of both communities. He has reprinted this admirable paper in his Selected Contributions, with this note (v. 4, p. 167):—"There is no one feeling—having public concerns for its object—with which I have been so long and so deeply impressed, as that of the vast importance of our maintaining friendly, and even cordial relations, with the free, powerful, moral, and industrious States of America:—a condition upon which I cannot help thinking that not only our own freedom and prosperity, but that of the better part of the world, will ultimately be found to be

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pose that he had nothing to do but to
talk. Nevertheless, besides the three articles
mentioned, he wrote, during this period, abo
thirty-six more, chiefly on literature, biography, and
general history.

It is unnecessary to enter into any explanation of the nature of the constitutional and economical reforms which the Whig party in Scotland had been long recommending; and which, now that the people had awakened, and the war could no longer be made the apology for adhering to every abuse, they pressed with greater confidence than ever. It is sufficient to state the facts, that the great majority of the nation deemed these reforms indispensable; and

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battles he had to fight, like most of the common
ttles of party after they are over, may seem insignificant now. But they were of very serious importance at the time, insomuch that there are many who will consider a failure to explain them as depriving Jeffrey of much of his public merit. But I cannot think that any exposition of their detail is necessary, or that reasonable curiosity may not be satisfied by a general reference to transactions which, even at the distance of thirty years, there is some pain in remembering. I shall therefore only state, that as it was clear that the battle of internal reform had begun, there was no place where this truth was per-

ceived with greater horror than at Edinburgh. The reason of this was that Edinburgh was the great seat of the influence of Government in Scotland. The most numerous, and the highest class of political competitors was there, and there was more patronage to fight for. Complaint had been so habitually crushed, that the defenders of the old system considered every effort towards independence as rebellion; while those who made these efforts treated opposition to them as tyranny. Neither of these feelings was at all unnatural, in the position of the parties. But the conflict was carried on with very different arms; which I shall not describe or contrast. The Whigs made no secret that their object was to emancipate Scotland. They were opposed with great bitterness, and with unhandsome weapons. These local animosities lasted some years, and brought Jeffrey and his associates into constant collision with their opponents. During those protracted and irritating proceedings, his judgment and his eloquence were often required, and nearly as often exerted; to the effect of greatly animating the spirits, and advancing the cause, of his party all over the country. I will not gain him praise by any more particular disclosure of scenes which I wish I could forget, and which I am persuaded that others regret. But I could convey no idea of his exertions in what he thought the right public cause without mentioning generally some of his appearances as they arose.

SIR JAMES GIBSON-CRAIG, BART.

It is impossible to do so, or indeed to explain almost any of the local proceedings of his public life, without mentioning Sir James Craig, who was active in them all. He died at his seat of Riccarton on the 6th March 1850, in his eighty-fifth year. Prompt, able, and vigorous, with a decisive and resolute manner, his whole life was spent in fearless usefulness. He was so prominent in our worst times, that it is difficult to understand how Thomas Muir could be transported, and James Gibson (his original name), not be even tried. Boldness, talent, and devotion to the apparently desperate cause of Scottish freedom, and even his personal strength and stateliness, made him the terror and hatred of some; while the same qualities, exercised without the relaxation of almost a single day, and given, without regard to trouble, risk, or expense, to every object connected with our liberation, made him the idol of others. No private individual, out of Parliament, never publishing, and rarely speaking, and largely occupied with private business, did so much, throughout all its progress, to uphold the popular cause. There could be no ebb or flow of Whiggism in Scotland, but this active and ardent spirit was sure to be in the midst of it. When public discussion was necessary, good sense generally withdrew him from the conspicuous positions; but those who occupied them could best tell what they owed to his previous management. Being the general patron of all the needy patriots in Scotland, to whom he had long been predicting brighter days, he sought

for places for them far oftener than he liked; but for himself he was spotless. He refused everything, both when the Whigs were in office, in 1805 and in 1830; and except his baronetcy, in 1832, I am not aware that any benefits depending on politics ever accrued through him, either to himself, or to any member of his family. Besides being relied upon by political allies, he had the personal confidence and esteem of many to whom his politics were odious. He owed this to his general ability in business, and to the warmth of his heart. For, with all his party zeal, he was a milky-blooded man. No one could doubt this who was ever with him in his family. Seeing Sir James Craig in his fields, or among his villagers, or by his fireside, was one of the sights that show how, in right natures, the kind affections can survive public contention. Craig's very name suggested the idea of Ephesus and conflict; yet no contented man, wearing his days away in the tranquillity of rural life, could be more amiable. This was one of the cases which make the simple comprehend how the fierce opposition of some public men can subsist with perfect candour and good will before each attack begins, and the instant after it ends; so that while the world sees nothing but the foaming of the cataract, and imagines that these men are all rapids, the truth is, that their private lives flow away sweetly and silently. Craig had almost a veneration for Jeffrey, and Jeffrey had a high esteem of him. Not that he could always sympathise with Sir James's zeal; or that he did not sometimes fret under his activity; or, especially when Lord Advocate, that he had not

occasionally to check his interference. But these exceptions left their general relation unimpaired, and whenever Jeffrey appeared publicly in any Scotch movement, it might be deemed nearly certain that he and Craig were in concert.

On the 24th of February 1816, a public meeting was held in Edinburgh, in favour of the abolition of the income-tax. Though not a party meeting, the bad example of any political meeting whatever excited considerable alarm. Jeffrey made the principal speech, and moved certain resolutions, which James Moncreiff seconded, and they were carried.

On the 5th of March 1817, in the paltry case of Maclaren and Baird (State Trials, vol. xxxiii.), who were that day convicted of sedition, he made the best speech that has ever yet been made in a Scotch court in defence of a prisoner accused of that crime.

The *Biographical Sketches of my Literary Life and Opinions*, by Mr. Coleridge, published that year, contained a very unhandsome personal attack on him, founded upon most inaccurate statements of what had passed at a visit paid by him to Mr. Southey in 1810, at which Mr. Coleridge was present. Jeffrey wrote a review of this work (No. 56, article 10, August 1817), to which he added a long note, giving his version of this affair, and defending his general literary treatment of the Lake school. This defence was quite proper at the time; but the personal matter has now become insignificant. The parties are all dead; and if any living man can believe that Jeffrey was capable of behaving with meanness and

cruelty, that person may read this note, and then adhere to his belief if he can.

It was about this time that he first became acquainted with the Rev. Dr. Chalmers, who began to contribute excellent articles to the Review. There was a strong mutual affection and admiration, each appreciating the virtues, and understanding the genius, of the other. There were few, unconnected with him in religious objects, whom Chalmers loved more; and Jeffrey always thought him a great moral philosopher, an enthusiastic philanthropist, and the noblest orator of the age.

In February 1818, he did what he never did before or since. He stuck a speech. John Kemble had taken his leave of our stage, and before quitting Edinburgh, about sixty or seventy of his admirers gave him a dinner and a snuff-box. Jeffrey was put into the chair, and had to make the address previous to the presentation. He began very promisingly, but got confused, and amazed both himself and everybody else, by actually sitting down, and leaving the speech unfinished; and, until reminded of that part of his duty, not even thrusting the box into the hand of the intended receiver. He afterwards told me the reason of this. He had not premeditated the scene, and thought he had nothing to do except in the name of the company to give the box. But as soon as he rose to do this, Kemble, who was beside him, rose also, and with most formidable dignity. This forced Jeffrey to look up to his man; when he found himself annihilated by the tall tragic god, who sank him to the earth at every compliment, by obeisances of

overwhelming grace and stateliness. If the chairman had anticipated his position, or recovered from his first confusion, his mind and words could easily have subdued even Kemble.

About this period Edinburgh was clouded by several sad deaths.

Horner died on the 8th of February 1817. His memoirs have since been published by his brother Leonard, to whom, both on his own account, and because it tended to recall the deceased, Jeffrey transferred great affection. Mr. Leonard Horner mentions in his preface, that, instead of making out this interesting life himself, he had put the papers into the hands of an "eminent person, who, by his early and uninterrupted intimacy with my brother, his varied accomplishments, and his known powers as a writer, was peculiarly fitted to be my brother's biographer." This person was Jeffrey, who delayed the task so long that he was obliged at last to give it up.

Henry Erskine died on the 8th of October of that year. Jeffrey thought so highly of him, that he wrote an account of him, which he sent, as he once or twice did other slight articles, to the Scots Magazine, then conducted by his friend Morehead, and afterwards gave it a place in the last volume of his Selected Contributions. It is short, but affectionate and just.

Erskine disappeared in old age. But Dr. John Gordon, physician, who died in June 1818, was taken from us in the very flower of his manhood. He was one of the many young men whose talents

the late Dr. John Thomson had the merit of discovering and encouraging. A taste for science was combined in him with well-directed industry, and with a look and manner inexpressibly pleasing. He was rising rapidly to the best medical practice, and the success of his private lectures on physiology justified our proudest hopes for the University. His unexpected loss made a momentary pause in our sorrow for Horner. Jeffrey had a genuine affection for him; a feeling, however, in which the whole community shared. He was only ill a few days; and on the last day he was ever out, he sat in an arbour in the garden of Craigcrook. His friend, Mr. Daniel Ellis, the author of several valuable works on vegetable physiology, published a memoir of him. The beautiful account of his personal character and demeanour was supplied by Jeffrey. The "*graceful frankness, and gay sincerity*," are very descriptive of the manner.

Lord Webb Seymour, after a long course of feeble health, passed away on the 19th of April 1819.

His great friend John Playfair, for whom indeed principally he had fixed himself in Edinburgh, followed him in three months. His death was on the 19th of July 1819. Jeffrey has left a description of this delightful philosopher also; so true and so discriminating, that it would be presumptuous in any one else to touch the portrait. That part of the funeral which takes place within the house was a spectacle never to be forgotten; attended as it was by the most eminent men in this place, among whom were Dugald Stewart, Dr. James Gregory, Mr. Henry

Mackenzie, the Rev. Archibald Alison, Dr. Thomas Brown, Mr. Thomas Thomson, Mr. Jeffrey, and others of that order, the friends and old associates of the deceased, and elevated by the noblest of prayers by Sir Harry.

To those who knew Edinburgh, I need not say what it suffered by the loss of these five men. They were the delight and the pride of the place.

Jeffrey felt equally honoured by the friendship of another eminent person, whose regard for him was the chief inducement to his occasionally visiting this place,—James Watt, the improver of the steam engine. He died on the 25th of August 1819. And, on the 4th of September, there appeared in the Scotsman newspaper, that striking delineation of the man, and what he had done, by Jeffrey, which he has since published at the end of his Contributions.

It was reported about this time that Mr. Thomas Moore had fallen under some severe pecuniary misfortune, on which Jeffrey wrote as follows to Mr. Rogers:—

"Edinburgh, 30th July 1819.—My dear Sir, I have been very much shocked and distressed by observing in the newspapers the great pecuniary calamity which has fallen on our excellent friend Moore; and not being able to get any distinct information, either as to its extent, or its probable consequences, from anybody here, I have thought it best to relieve my anxiety by applying to you, whose kind concern in him must have made you acquainted with all the particulars, and willing, I hope, to satisfy the inquiries of one who sincerely

shows interest in his concerns. I do not know, however, that I should have troubled you merely to answer any useless inquiry. But in wishing to know whether any steps have been taken to mitigate this disaster, I am desirous of knowing also, whether I can be of any use on the occasion. I have unfortunately not a great deal of money to spare. But if it should be found practicable to relieve him from this unmerited distress by any contribution, I beg leave to say I should think it an honour to be allowed to take a share in it to the extent of £300, or £500, and that I could advance more than double that sum over and above, upon any reasonable security of ultimate repayment, however long postponed. I am quite aware of the difficulty of carrying through any such arrangement with a man of Moore's high feeling and character, and had he been unmarried, or without children, he might have been less reluctantly left to the guidance and support of that character. But as it is, I think his friends are bound to make an effort to prevent such lasting and extended misery as, from all I have heard, seems now to be impending. And in hands at once so kind and so delicate as yours, I flatter myself that this may be found practicable. I need not add, I am sure, that I am most anxious that, whether ultimately acted upon or not, this communication should never be mentioned to Moore himself. If you please you may tell him that I have been deeply distressed by his misfortunes, and should be most happy to do him any service. But as I have no right to speak to him of money, I do not

think he should know that I have spoken of it to you. If my offer is accepted, I shall consider you and not him as the acceptor. And he ought not to be burdened with the knowledge of any other benefactor.

"Is there no chance of seeing you in Scotland again? We have had a sad loss in Playfair, and which is quite irreparable to the society here. It is a comfort to think we cannot possibly have such another. We had a great fright about Scott, but fortunately he is quite recovered. I have a sort of project of running over to Paris again this autumn. If I had a chance of finding you in the Rue de Rivoli, I should not hesitate a moment. I am not quite so insensible to the advantages of this encounter as I appeared to be. And I have a thousand times since reproached myself for having made so little use of them."

A commission was issued in summer 1820 for the trial of certain persons in Scotland who were charged with high treason. Jeffrey, from that professional charity which is so common and so honourable at the Scotch bar, where no prisoner has ever been tried without counsel, went to Stirling, and took charge of some of the defences. He tells Mrs. Morehead (July 1820), "I have made two long speeches, and have not spared or disgraced myself; though success was scarcely possible." The thing that distinguished the proceedings, in so far as he personally was concerned, was, that for the only occasion in his whole practice, he got into bad terms with a professional brother. This brother was a serjeant, who had been

sent from England to keep us all right in the mysteries of English treason law. I believe he was a very good man, and his being charged with such a duty seems to show that he was a respectable counsel. But some of those who were present report that he was plainly prepossessed with very contemptuous ideas of everything Scotch, but especially of the lawyers. He had no notion what Jeffrey was, and had probably never heard either of him or of the Edinburgh Review. His disdain was returned without ceremony. It is likely that there were faults on both sides. But the fact is that they got on very ill, and were on the very edge of personal quarrel.

It was in 1820 that he had the comfort of finding Miss Joanna Baillie reconciled to him. His criticisms of her plays, though able, and even complimentary, but not without discrimination, gave not unnatural offence when they first appeared (1803), from something of apparent flippancy, or at least of what a lady might suppose to be so, in their style, and she long declined being introduced to him. They met, however, in Edinburgh this autumn, with the almost invariable result on those who had a prejudice against him, of permanent respect and esteem. He, ever after making her acquaintance, continued her steady friend, and seldom was in London without going to Hampstead to see her. "We went out to Joanna Baillie yesterday, and found her delightfully cheerful, kind, and simple, without the least trait of the tragic muse about her."—(To me, 1st April 1838.) "I forgot to tell you that I have been twice out to Hampstead to hunt out Joanna Baillie, and found

her, the other day, as fresh, natural, and amiable, as ever, and as little like a tragic muse. Since Mrs. Brougham's death, I do not know so nice an old woman."—(To Miss Brown, 28th April 1840.) "We went out to Hampstead, and paid a very pleasant visit to Joanna Baillie, who is marvellous in health and spirits, and youthful freshness and simplicity of feeling, and not a bit blind, deaf, or torpid."—(To Miss Brown, January 1842.) "I had a very kind visit from Joanna Baillie to-day; looking beautiful, and without a touch of blindness, deafness, or languor, and now in her eightieth year."—(To me, 22d February 1842.) "That nice Joanna Baillie has also been in my neighbourhood for several days, and is the prettiest, best dressed, kindest, happiest, and most entire beauty of fourscore that has been seen since the flood."—(February 1842.)

Towards the close of this year a public meeting was held in Edinburgh, which, in reference to the state of Scotland at that time, was very important, and is not yet forgotten. It is known as "*The Pantheon Meeting*," from the building within which it was held. It was called in order to petition the Crown for the dismissal of the ministry; and was thus not merely political, but directly hostile to existing power; being the first open and respectable assemblage that had been convened in this place for such a purpose for about twenty-five years. It was meant, and was received as a criterion of the strength of the two parties, of those friendly and those opposed to reform; and there could be no better evidence of its importance, than the fury with which all connected

with it were assailed. All that I have to do with it is in reference to Jeffrey. It was a large and respectable assemblage, held on the 19th of December 1820. Moncreiff presided. The excitement, the inexperience in the art of managing such convocations, and the danger of language as violent as that which had for several days been directed against it, made it at first a very hazardous experiment. But Jeffrey rose, and all fears vanished. He made the first, and a very moderate speech; well calculated for popular effect certainly, but which would have done most men honour in a fastidious parliament. It soon made the meeting take the proper tone, and feel that its strength lay in avoiding the extravagance of which it had been predicted that it would be guilty. Accordingly, after carrying strong resolutions, with only two dissentient voices, the proceedings, and the day, closed in peace.*

The first official honour that he ever received was now conferred upon him by the students of the College of Glasgow. They elected him their Lord Rector. This officer is the second person in the establishment in rank, being inferior to the Chancellor alone. It is too often considered as a merely honorary situation; but it has important duties, and ought as rarely as possible to be made so. In academical jurisdiction, the rector is superior even to the chancellor. He is elected annually in November by the professors and the matriculated students. For many years the custom had been for the students not seriously to

* The petition was signed by about 17,000 persons; the opposite by fewer than 2000.

interfere; and, judging from the list of the elected, the professors seem to have been on wonderfully good terms with the country gentlemen in their neighbourhood. Adam Smith, who was chosen in 1787, was the last person who could have been chosen on account of his literary or philosophical reputation. Jeffrey, who was the next, would never have been chosen in 1820 by the professors. But things had begun to change; of which there could not possibly be more striking signs than the two facts, that these young men took the election into their own hands, where they have kept it ever since, and that their first choice fell upon him. His having been at that college himself, and having frequently attended their annual distribution of prizes, on the 1st of May, perhaps inclined them a little towards him; but these accidents alone would never have produced the result. He was elected as a homage to his personal literature, and to the great work with which his name was associated, and to his public principles and conduct. When he told us of this perfectly unanticipated event, it sounded like the intimation of a miracle. He went to Glasgow, and was installed on the 28th of December 1820, ten days after the Pantheon meeting. The novelty of the occasion created great excitement.

He made a beautiful speech; beautifully delivered.* It delighted him to do justice to the eminent men he remembered there,—Reid, Millar, and Jardine,

* It is the first in a handsome volume of "Inaugural Discourses by Lords Rectors of the University of Glasgow," by John Barras Hay, published in 1839.

the last of whom had the gratification of hearing his old pupil's address. Of himself he says, "It was here that, now more than thirty years ago, I received the earliest, and by far the most valuable, part of my academical education; and first imbibed that relish and veneration for letters, which has cheered and directed the whole course of my after life; and to which, amidst all the distractions of rather too busy an existence, I have never failed to return with fresh and unabated enjoyment. Nor is it merely by those distant and pleasing recollections —by the touching retrospect of those scenes of guiltless ambition and youthful delight, when everything around and before me was bright with novelty and hope—that this place, and all the images it recalls, are at this moment endeared to my heart. Though I have been able, I fear, to do but little to honour this early nurse of my studies, since I was first separated from her bosom, I will yet presume to say, that I have been, during all that interval, an affectionate, and not an inattentive son. For the whole of that period, I have watched over her progress, and gloried in her fame. And at your literary olympics, where your prizes are distributed, and the mature swarm annually cast off to ply its busy task in the wider circuit of the world, I have generally been found a fond and eager spectator of that youthful prowess in which I had ceased to be a sharer, and a delighted chronicler of that excellence which never ceased to be supplied."

He closes by this admonition—"I have but a word more to say, and that is addressed, perhaps

needlessly, to the younger part of my hearers. It would be absurd to suppose that they had not heard often enough of the dignity of the studies in which they are engaged, and of the infinite importance of improving the time that is now allotted for their cultivation. Such remarks, however, I think I can recollect, are sometimes received with distrust, when they come from those anxious teachers whose authority they may seem intended to increase; and, therefore, I venture to think that it may not be altogether useless for me to add my unsuspected testimony in behalf of those great truths; and, while I remind the careless youth around me, that the successful pursuit of their present studies is indispensable to the attainment of fame or fortune in after life, also to assure them, from my own experience, that they have a value far beyond their subserviency to worldly prosperity; and will supply, in every situation, the purest and most permanent enjoyment, at once adorning and relieving the toils and vexations of a busy life, and refining and exalting the enjoyments of a social one. It is impossible, however, that those studies can be pursued to advantage in so great an establishment as this, without the most dutiful observance of that discipline and subordination, without which so numerous a society must unavoidably fall into the most miserable disorder, and the whole benefits of its arrangements be lost. As one of the guardians of this discipline, I cannot bid you farewell, therefore, without most earnestly entreating you to submit cheerfully, habitually, and gracefully, to all that

the parental authority of your instructors may find it necessary to enjoin; being fully persuaded, that such a free and becoming submission is not only the best proof of the value you put on their instructions, but, in so far as I have ever observed, the most unequivocal test of a truly generous and independent character."

Death has been busy since; but of about a dozen friends who accompanied him, six or seven survive, and remember the joyous nocturnal banquet by which the formal and academical festival of this installation was followed.

He was elected again, according to the usual practice, next year (November 1821); and in November 1822 had a very painful duty to discharge. The electors are divided into four Nations, and it is a vote by a majority of the Nations that decides each election; and as a small Nation counts the same with a large one, there may be a great majority of individual votes, while the Nations stand two to two. In 1822 the persons set up were Sir Walter Scott and Sir James Mackintosh. The Nations were equally divided, but the majority of individual votes was in favour of Sir James. In this situation it devolved on the preceding rector to decide. Both of the two chosen were eminent, both Scotchmen, both his personal friends. His feeling was to do all honour to the illustrious Sir Walter. But his reason compelled him to give his decision in favour of Mackintosh. His grounds were, that though nothing could exceed the glory of Scott, Mackintosh was unquestionably the more aca-

demical; and that his supporters were the most numerous. This last consideration has generally been deemed conclusive in such an emergency. On retiring he founded a prize.

Soon after his installation, he took an active part in a series of political meetings; of all of which, though they went on annually for five years after this (1821 to 1826 inclusive), it may be as well to dispose at once. When I mention that they were all public dinners, it may seem that, after such an interval, they might have been allowed to be forgotten. But, in point of fact, they are not forgotten yet, and were by far the most effective of all the public movements in Scotland on the popular side at that time. Amidst the numerous similar meetings that were then held all over the empire, they were prominent from the numbers, the respectability, and the talent, that distinguished them. They were organised chiefly by the method and activity of Mr Leonard Horner, the founder of our School of Arts and, indirectly, of all such institutions; one of the most useful citizens that Edinburgh ever possessed They gathered together the aristocracy, in station and in character, of the Scotch Whig party; but derived still greater weight from the open accession of citizens, who for many years had been taught to shrink from political interference on this side as hurtful to their business. The meetings were always held, as nearly as could be, on the anniversary of the birthday of Charles Fox. To some of the elder, these free and open meetings were a gratifying contrast to the days in which this festival was very

privately held; yet rarely without there being officers and spies set to watch the door, and to take down the names of those who entered—a hint which only a few bolder spirits had nerve to disregard.

These were not scenes in which it was beneath any man to act. Jeffrey entered into their spirit and their business cordially; and spoke at every one of them; and never did he speak anywhere with more forethought. Nothing but a sense of duty could have compelled him to adhere so steadily to exhibitions, for which, in themselves, he had a strong distaste. He never stooped to any topic so low as that it bordered on the common vulgarities of party; but inspired his audiences by appeals to general principles. These addresses were sufficient of themselves to impress a character of purity and dignity on each assemblage. He elevated them towards the highest objects; which he gave them a desire to reach only by the most liberal ways. He presided on the 24th of January 1825; when he perhaps displayed as much intellect and power in that sort of speaking as ever sustained any one in that peculiar and hazardous position. At the meeting on the 26th of January 1826, he was thought to have surpassed himself in a speech recommending candour and respect towards America. On the 18th of November 1825, he spoke twice at another dinner given to Mr. Joseph Hume—that is to the cause of economy which that gentleman was supposed to represent. One of these addresses was on behalf of the Spaniards and Italians who had sought refuge in Britain. The other was on the combination laws; and was chiefly

valuable on account of his clear and eloquent explanation of the dangers and follies of unions and strikes by workmen. This speech was published as a pamphlet, and in two or three days above 8000 copies were sold.

Throughout all these movements the case of Scotland was powerfully upheld by two friends of his, — the Hon. James Abercrombie, afterwards speaker, and now Lord Dunfermline, and Mr. Kennedy of Dunure, M.P.; to both of whom, amidst higher calls to this duty, the fact of Jeffrey's opinions and co-operation was a powerful additional inducement to engage in the course where their services were so conspicuous and valuable.

I do not know the particulars of the scheme, but there was a scheme, towards the close of the year 1821, to bring Jeffrey into Parliament; which he defeated by positively declining. The proposal was made in confidence, and therefore he never spoke of it. But on the 27th of January 1822, he wrote to Mr. Wilkes, "I have had two overtures to take a seat in Parliament; but have given a peremptory refusal—from taste as well as from prudence. I am not in the least ambitious, and feel no desire to enter upon public life at such a moment as the present."

Lochlomond.

He was an idolater of Lochlomond, and used often to withdraw there and refresh himself by its beauties. After resorting for several years to inns, he made the

acquaintance of a gentleman (Mr. M'Murrich) who, observing the stranger's attachment to the loch, and having more room in his house than he required, invited him, with Mrs. Jeffrey and their child, to take up their quarters, but leaving them to follow their own times and ways, at his delightful little residence on the lake, as often and as long as they chose. This kind and considerate proposal being acceded to, they went to Stuckgown in the autumn of 1822. These sojourns generally lasted two or three weeks, and were renewed, though not exactly every year, till his daughter's marriage in 1838, when they ceased. Dearly did he enjoy these retirements. He pretended to like even the boating, and delighted in mountains, for which one of his habits—an indifference about rain—was very convenient.

His first retreat to Stuckgown is thus mentioned in a letter to his father-in-law Mr. Wilkes:—"22d September 1822, Edinburgh—My dear friend, Here we are, enjoying our autumn leisure as idly as it were never to end, and as much like what we were last year and the year before, and so on, as if we had neither grown older, nor intended ever to begin. The only thing that changes visibly is the little one, who does grow bigger and dearer from year to year, and makes us start to think that she was a nonentity when we parted. Well, but is not this a very good account of us, and almost all that need be said? This royal visit* kept us in a fever for a month of sweet weather, and then we posted away to Loch

* Of George IV. to Edinburgh.

Lomond, where we stayed ten days among our dear cataracts and cliffs, and have only returned about a week to our own quiet home. It rained almost every day while we were in the Highlands, and most commonly all day; but the weather never confined either Charlotte or me for an hour, and I do not think at all interfered with our enjoyment. It was soft, and calm, and balmy, and we walked, and rowed, and climbed, and scrambled, without minding the rain any more than the ravens. We were out eight or nine hours every day, thoroughly wet most of the time, and never experienced the least inconvenience or discomfort; but came home more plump and rosy than we had been since last year. The roaring of the mountain torrents in a calm morning after a raining night has something quite delicious to my ears, and actually makes a kind of music, of which you dwellers in the plains can have no conception. From the platform before our door we had twenty at least in sight, and more than a hundred within hearing; and the sort of thrilling they made in the air, with the mingling of the different waters on the last swelling of the breeze, had an effect quite overpowering and sublime. We had a few delicious days on our return, which was by Hamilton and the Falls of Clyde; and now we have bright crisp autumn weather, deeply tinted foliage, and great clusters of holyhocks, China roses, stocks and mignonette. The child was with us of course all the time, bathed every day in the Loch, and went with me on the barouche seat of the carriage, chattering the whole way, and taking her first lessons in picturesque beauty. Both

she and her mother, I think, have come home fatter than I remember to have seen them."

Early in 1823 Mr. Wilkes came from New York with his two daughters, Mrs. Colden and Miss Wilkes, and Mr. Colden, on a visit to Jeffrey, and to his brother-in-law Mons. Simond at Geneva. It was a grateful visit to the family at Craigcrook, and to its Edinburgh friends, who, though they have never seen Mrs. Jeffrey's sisters since, have the greatest pleasure in their recollection. Mr. Wilkes, who died in 1833, gained every heart. There never was a more lovable man.

As the American party meant to go to the Continent, this tempted Jeffrey to engraft an expedition of his own on theirs; and Mr. Richardson and I agreed to join him. Venice was our main object; seeing as much else as we could in the short time we had. We accordingly set off in July; saw Belgium and Holland, went up the Rhine into Switzerland, crossed by St. Gothard down upon the north of Italy, and so to Venice; where we remained some days; then homewards by Milan, the Simplon, Geneva, and Paris. Jeffrey's journal is full of dates, places, and striking observations and descriptions, but contains nothing worth making public. It was a delightful journey. Its only defect arose from his inveterate abhorrence of early rising; which compelled us to travel during the hottest part of the day. This aversion to the dawn, unless when seen before going to bed, lasted his whole life. He very seldom went to sleep so soon as two in the morning, and distrusted all accounts of the early

rising virtues. He tells Lord Murray, in a letter in 1829, that he had been much pleased with a family he had been visiting near Bath, "especially with the patriarch, a marvellous brisk young gentleman of eighty-two, who gallops up and down the country in all weathers, reads without spectacles, and is neither deaf, dull, nor testy. I find, to my great delight, that he never rose early in his life; though I am concerned to add that he has for some years been a water drinker; a vice, however, which he talks of reforming."

He was in London again in 1824, upon Scotch appeals; with which, indeed, his visits there were very often connected. This, however, was work which, notwithstanding his experience in it, he seems to have liked as little as any counsel can ever like to argue their own law before judges who do not understand it. His practice there had hitherto been almost exclusively before Lord Eldon; who, by patience, dignity, learning, and respect for the law he had to dispense, and for the courts he had to direct, left that house a model of the judicial qualities by which alone its high appellate character can be maintained. Yet, even the presidency of this judge, however it might mitigate, could not entirely remove, the disagreeableness of addressing a court considerably ignorant of the law it had to declare. The mere necessity of translating terms, and of explaining rudiments, is teasing; and there is a far more serious distress in the tendency of every foreign court to respect, or to despise, whatever it may hear of the law of another country, solely according to

its agreement with the law of their own. Before a cautious and liberal judge, a comparison of systems may benefit both. But with a rash or a commonplace judge, it is apt to be very hurtful. It leads him to condemn, and to ridicule, whatever is strange to his narrow vision; and covers presumption or indifference under the shelter of the law within which he may be respectable. Such a person, instead of being awed by conscious ignorance into modesty, naturally falls into the style of showing his superiority by openly contemning, because it is foreign, the law, which it is his duty to understand, or not to administer.*

It added to his discomfort that the dignity of that high tribunal, though the judicial uniform may be dispensed with, cannot be maintained without the full bar attire. He bemoans, in a letter written

* It would be a valuable law book which, omitting cases of fact, or useless, should examine the past course of the appellate judgments, with the view of weighing its effects, for good or for evil, on the law and the practice of Scotland on points of permanent importance.

The disposal of individual causes, however, is not the sole use of a court of appeal. Its indirect influence in controlling inferior tribunals is very material; and throughout the first hundred years after the Union, there were circumstances in the condition of Scotland which made this control indispensable. But an appeal now to a court not at home in the law on which the appeal depends, and unaided by any Scotch lawyers, except those who may happen to be at the bar, and are consequently interested, does certainly seem strange; especially as the law of England appears to tolerate no rival, and its practice to be ill calculated for opening the mind to the comprehension of general principles, or of any foreign system. Our English friends would perhaps understand the

after a day's attendance there, on this occasion, the severity of being obliged to "sit six hours silent, *in a wig.*"

In 1825 he got what he calls "*a glimpse* of Ireland," being his only one. His friend, the late Mr. Mungo Brown, a person of piety and of singular purity of character, was going to the assizes at Carrickfergus, to give evidence of the Scotch marriage law, and this seems to have been Jeffrey's temptation to go and take a look of the country. They left Greenock on the 25th of July, and were home again on the 1st of August; so that it was truly but a glimpse. Yet they were very active, and his journal is rather amusing. "One sees the Irish character at once, even in this new and half Scottish colony—(Belfast). The loquacity—

matter better, if it were proposed to make appeals competent from their courts to ours, of which the principles are so much more extensively founded on what seems, not merely to ourselves, but to enlightened strangers, to be reason. The great problem is, to get the law of Scotland deferred to in the court of appeal; which in this matter is in theory, and ought to be in practice, a Scotch court.

We sometimes hear English counsel blamed for their open derision of the law of Scotland at the bar of the House of Lords, which it is said that they occasionally profess to feel as an abomination, and purify themselves (after taking fees in it) by protesting that they find it difficult to speak seriously about anything so barbarous. If this charge be true, its only importance is in its application to the court. Counsel seldom say what they believe will offend the judges.

The proper form of obtaining judicial aid from Scotland, *when it is required*, is a matter deserving great consideration; but with the example of England before us, it is not obvious how there should be much difficulty.

the flattery—the gaiety—the prompt, unhesitating engagement for all things—the reckless boasting—the shameless failure—the audacious falsehood—the entire good nature, kindness, and sociality of disposition—are all apparent at the very first, and do not soon cease to strike." He saw a good deal of O'Connell, who is described as "large and muscular; with an air and an eye in which a half natural, and half assumed, indolent good nature and simplicity is curiously blended with a kind of cunning and consciousness of superiority. He spoke with a great deal of brogue, and very fearlessly and readily, on all subjects,—Catholic and English supremacy, Irish business, law and individuals—without study or apparent attention to words or effect." The velocity of the criminal proceedings shocked him; but he was pleased with the civil trial for which Brown had gone, though less with the bar than with the bench. "I heard North make a speech of two and a half hours, which I understood was a good specimen of the most ornate style of speaking in Ireland. It was very elegantly and exactly composed, but I thought puerile in its style and ornaments, and singularly injudicious and extravagant in its statement, when compared with the evidence by which it was followed. It was very clear, however, not very verbose, and very pure on the whole in diction. But he talked of the Catholic laws '*turning the torch of Hymen into the black brand of Alecto;*' and told the jury that if they refused to believe a witness because there might be '*inaccuracies and exaggerations*

in his evidence, they might as well refuse to drink of the pure and wholesome stream because its waters were stained by the earth which composed its banks, or chafed by the rocks or pebbles which broke the smoothness of its course.'" Jeffrey had the honour of dining with the judges and the leading counsel, but gives rather a bad account of the physical part of the banquet:—"no napkins even, or silver forks, bad port and sherry at dinner, and two bottles of bad claret after."

Political economy is so recent a science that no provision for its being taught could be made by the constitution of old colleges. Accordingly, it was never taught in any Scotch college, except by Professor Mylne at Glasgow, and by Dugald Stewart, in his two short and very general courses, at the beginning of this century. Having now become the most important of all the practical moral sciences, an effort was made during this summer (1825) to obtain a Regius Professorship for it in Edinburgh, and to confer the office on Mr. John R. M'Culloch, who had already given excellent lectures on this subject, and was rising into the position he has attained, as the first economist of the age. The scheme was at first warmly patronised by Mr. Wallace, the President of the Board of Trade, by Canning, Huskisson, and Lord Dudley. Mr. Huskisson recommended that a memorial should be got from Edinburgh, respectably, but not numerously, signed, offering to endow the chair, and praying the Crown to erect it, which he engaged to lay before Government. Jeffrey, who took a deep interest in

the affair, both from his conviction of its utility, and from his regard for Mr. M'Culloch, and his certainty of his friend's fitness, drew up the memorial;* which was subscribed by thirty or forty excellent names, including those of five judges and twelve professors, who, "or some of them," engaged to secure an adequate endowment. But at this stage an unworthy obstacle was thrown in the way from Edinburgh, and the plan was defeated.

Jeffrey partook in 1826 of the sorrow and consternation of all Scotland, on the disclosure of the pecuniary misfortunes of Sir Walter Scott. Mr. Constable, the publisher of the Review, whose bankruptcy produced the crash, was Jeffrey's debtor to a very considerable amount on account of that work. The claim, after some negotiation, was settled. But even while his recovering anything seemed extremely doubtful, all feeling for his own loss was forgotten amidst his grief for the severer calamity that had fallen upon Scott. Indeed it never disturbed his serenity. Writing to Mr. Richardson, who acted as usual as his professional friend in London, he says, (21st January 1826)—"It is grievous to annoy you with all this dull stuff, which I am happy to tell you does not make me in the least unhappy. Cockburn has taken advantage of it to indite what he terms a *Constable dinner;* to be held at my house next Saturday, and to *be continued weekly till I get out of my difficulties.*"

In the year 1827 he left his house in George

* It was afterwards published in the Scotsman newspaper, 27th September 1826.

Street, and rose to his last domicile in 24 Moray Place.

His practice, which was now in its zenith, lessened his contributions to the Review, and made him feverish about new writers. "Can you not lay your hands on some clever young man who would write for us? The original supporters of the work are getting old, and either too busy, or too stupid, to go on comfortably; and here the young men are mostly Tories."—(To Allen, 3d January 1825.)

During the first gleam of liberal government, under Mr. Canning in 1827, Jeffrey was advised by some of his English friends of influence to try and obtain a seat on the bench if there should be a vacancy. He had no objections to this "*honesta demissio*," but adds (to me, 20th October 1827)—"I had a hankering after the '*dignified ease of a Baron of Exchequer.*'" A very natural hankering for one who merely wished for a sinecure office, but an odd conception for a person of his activity. He would have exhibited himself in the insignificance of a tribunal which had outlived its usefulness, and was now in its dotage. It was soon extinguished (1832), to the satisfaction of those who hold a necessarily idle court to be a bad judicial spectacle; but to the indignation of such as think that there can never be a good reason for abolishing an office; and to the more respectable regret of some who sigh impartially over the disappearance of our old institutions.

These last have had much to bemoan in the recent progress of Scotland. The time was when public economy was no longer an unknown term. But the

uselessness of certain respectable things became at last inconveniently obvious, and the vicinity of London drew local arrangements within its insatiable grasp. Then began an official eradication, which, though in general necessary, certainly requires now a sparing hand.

There was a time when the idea of his being a judge could not have entered into Jeffrey's mind. He and his tribe had been taught to leave all hope behind them on entering the Whig ranks. But the interdiction was relaxing, and certain recent proceedings, most honourable to Tory Governments, must have made him fancy that he was not now beyond the reach of promotion. After a long monopoly on the opposite side, one Whig had been made a judge in 1811, and another in 1813. There was then a pause of ten years. But in 1823 John Clerk was promoted; in 1826 Cranstoun; and in 1829 Fullerton and Moncreiff; being six places on the bench bestowed on political opponents in eighteen years. The merit of the four last is justly claimed for Sir Robert Peel; who, in this respect, has left an example of public propriety, which no successor in the Home Office ought to forget. It is easy to profess the principle of always preferring the fittest man; but as judicial chairs, though not political retainers, may be political rewards, the temptations to violate it are very strong. So much the more honour is due to the minister, without whose purity it cannot be certain that the services even of these men would have been secured to the public.

There can be little doubt that if Jeffrey could have undergone judicial promotion, he would. And there can be as little doubt that this would have been a great misfortune to himself. He was not yet ripe. He would have been left out of the new and stirring scenes in which he was soon required to act. He would have lost the four interesting years of that brilliant London life in which he was so conspicuous and so popular; and the self-improvement implied, in the case of a good absorbent, in its spirit and variety. Deprived, before age and sated experience had sobered him into repose, of both the Review and his profession, though he could never have become dull, he might possibly have subsided into a state of more passive comfort than he would have been truly reconciled to; and the affections, with their softening influences, might have come to be exclusively relied upon.

The possibility of some judicial promotion having transpired, the fact of his connection with the Review was whispered as an objection. He asks what the *exact ground* of the objection is, and says (to me, 1st November 1827)—"I was always aware that the political character of the work, its *party* principles, and occasional party violence, *might*, when concentrated on the head of the only ostensible party, raise an objection of moment; and for this and its consequences I should not care much. But it has occurred to me, I confess for the first time, that the objection may be rested on the notion that the *Editor of a periodical work*, whatever its political character might be, and even if it were purely lite-

rary, and without any politics, had derogated from the personal dignity required in a judge, and ought not to presume so high. From the very first I have been anxious to keep clear of any tradesman-like concern in the Review, and to confine myself pretty strictly to intercourse with *gentlemen* only, even as contributors. It would vex me, I must own, to find that, in spite of this, I have lowered my own character, and perhaps even that of my profession, by my connection with a publication which I certainly engaged with on very high grounds, and have managed, I think, without dirtying my hands in any paltry matters. If it be so, however, I beg you will tell me; not merely with a view to these present dependences, but to my whole future life. But this is for talk."

The purity of his hands was so complete, that throughout all the high official honours that awaited him, this objection was never heard of. However disposed for judicial promotion, there were four persons before whom, with his usual generosity, he says he would not like to advance. These were his friends, George Bell, Mr. Thomas Thomson, John Fullerton, and myself.

On the 14th of March 1829, he came forward at the last public meeting (not connected with his elections) that he ever attended; and it was a magnificent one. It was called to petition in favour of the removal of the Roman Catholic disabilities; and was composed of as many as could get into the Assembly room—which could not be much, if at all,

fewer than two thousand.* All parties, except the one which wished these disabilities perpetuated, were represented there, and a Conservative presided. The two most impressive speeches were by Jeffrey and Chalmers. Both were admirable; but more in spirit and in manner, than in any originality of thought, which so hackneyed a subject scarcely admitted of. Nothing could be more perfect than the exquisite diction, beautiful articulation, good taste, and generous feeling of the one; or the burning vehemence of the other. The effect of both was very great. But in a popular assembly, ardour will ever, at the moment, be more impressive than grace. No more powerful emotion was ever produced by words, than at the close of Chalmers' address. Brilliant and glowing as his written pages are, they are cold and dull compared with his spoken intensity. The rough broken voice,—the ungainly form,—the awkward gesture,—the broad dingy face,—gave little indication of what was beneath. But the capacious brow! —and the soul!—*mens agitat molem.*

In a few months after this, an event happened which ended his connection with the Review. Mr. Moncreiff, the Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, was raised to the bench. The Deanship is merely a station of honour; but when not lowered by the interference of political, or other improper, considerations, it is the highest honour of the kind that can be conferred in Scotland. Each election is only for a single year; but he who once succeeds is

* A shilling ought to have been paid for admittance, and about 1700 shillings were received at the door.

almost never dispossessed, so that it is the presidency for life, or during the holder's pleasure, of the most important public body in the country. Jeffrey's friends naturally looked to him as Moncreiff's successor; and Mr. Geo. Jos. Bell seems to have written to him advising him to canvass, and even to give up the Review as a canvassing step. The answer to this was—"If my friends think that a stand should now be made, and that they can make their best stand on me, I am willing to be stood on; and shall be honoured and gratified to be promoted or defeated in their behalf. But I think it becomes me to be passive, or chiefly passive, and most certainly I shall originate or suggest nothing in the cause. 2d, As for the Review, I have an affection for it of old, and I would rather make the money I make by it, in that way, than by the same quantity of work in my profession. At the same time, I have perhaps done it all the good I am likely to do, and the best service I could now render it, probably, would be to put it into younger hands. 3d, If I were *sure* of being made Dean by announcing that *I had given up* the Review, I think I would do it at once. But being pretty sure that I shall *not* be Dean, whatever I announce, I shall not make any such annunciation."

Accordingly, no such pledge was given. But Mr. John Hope, the Solicitor-General, who had been set up against him (or been proposed to be so), withdrew, and on the 2d of July 1829 Jeffrey was elected unanimously. He says in the preface to his Contributions, that if Mr. Hope had not "generously deferred to my seniority, his perseverance might

have endangered the result." It would have done more than endangered it. Considering, in addition to the Solicitor's own professional eminence, the Conservative condition of a majority of the bar, there can be little doubt that his perseverance would have prevented the result, and that he might have taken the place to himself. But he acted on this occasion with the liberality that had marked his conduct in the previous case of Mr. Moncreiff (Nov. 2, 1826), for whose elevation to the Dean's chair he made the motion. He also moved in favour of Jeffrey, in a kind and manly speech. At Jeffrey's request, I had the honour of seconding. In his note asking me, he begs me to "say as little ill of me as your conscience will let you. The Solicitor means to propose me, but I hope to have the countenance and a good word of one at least of my old friends. I am not very sure that I do wisely in asking this; for I feel more nervous in the prospect of this public ceremony than I can well account for; and though I could stand the eulogies of the public accuser steadily enough, I am not quite sure of being able to maintain my dignity against the testimonies that come from the heart, and go to it."—(29th June 1829.)

The two previous Deans, Mr. Cranstoun and Mr. Moncreiff, were strong Whigs. But they were great lawyers, and were not implicated, even by one single contribution, in the offences of the Review. Jeffrey was personally guilty of many of them, and as editor was held responsible for them all. Yet he was elected. The Faculty did itself great credit by this proceeding, and received great honour in return.

He owed his elevation to his professional eminence, to his literary renown, to his undivided personal popularity, and to the liberality of that majority of his brethren who liked him more than they disliked his political principles and those of his work. It showed the improvement of public opinion, and the softening of party hatred.

"It immediately occurred to me (says he in his preface) that it was not quite fitting that the official head of a great law corporation should continue to be the conductor of what might be fairly enough represented as in many respects a party journal; and I consequently withdrew at once, and altogether, from the management." The 98th number, which came out in June 1829, was the last he edited; and, excepting three or four papers which he wrote long afterwards, the one on the Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe, published in October 1829, was the last he ever furnished as a regular contributor.

The Review then passed into the able hands of its second editor, the late Mr. Macvey Napier.

He had often been advised to make a list of his own contributions, but though not at all desirous of concealing any of them, he treated it as a matter of indifference, and never would take the trouble. I was glad, therefore, when, one day in December 1840, I found him, on my renewing the proposal, not so averse as he used to be; and we soon sat down, and began with the first number, and in the course of a week or two we went through the whole work, authenticating all his papers. His memory rarely showed its tenacity more strikingly. His

recollection of the articles either wholly or partially his, was so assured, that he generally recognised them as soon as he saw the title. If there was a doubt, it was commonly solved by his mentioning, before going farther, some fact, or phrase, or metaphor, or striking sentence, or something of this kind, and saying,—"If that be there it is mine." His conjecture was almost always confirmed on reading the article, both by finding the test, and by the general revival of his recollection; so that at last all uncertainty was removed. This list, brought down so as to include his four subsequent contributions, amounting to 201 articles, will be found in the Appendix. He said that there might possibly be one or two mistakes, but that he did not think that there were any.

It is impossible, on thus seeing the collected outpourings of his mind, not to be struck by the variety of his matter. Instead of having confined himself to literature, as his prevailing taste for this department has made it sometimes be supposed that he did, there is scarcely a theme that he has not discussed, with all his fertility of view, and all his beauty of style. What other eight volumes by one man contain such writing, or such mind, on so many, and so various, of the most delightful and important subjects of human speculation?

On closing the labours of these twenty-seven years, he had a career to look back upon such as never elevated the heart of any one who had instructed the public by periodical address. It is not my business to review the Review; and I am con-

scious of incapacity to do it. But it is not very difficult to state the grounds on which I think that this was a splendid retrospect.

Independent of special objections to particular articles, the general censures to which the work was exposed were the same in 1829 that they were as soon as its character and objects were disclosed. And certainly it was not for want of warning that what were said to be its errors were persevered in. Its enemies, for several years, found great comfort in its abuse; which they vented in streams of pamphlets that make curious reading now. Instead of practising the moderation and candour, the absence of which from the Review is their great complaint, they almost uniformly exceed, by a hundred-fold, most of the offences which they ascribe to it. But they are generally kind enough to admonish the wicked editor of the disgrace into which he is falling in the sight of all good men, and of the speedy extinction of his abominable work. Except in the case of the Earl of Lauderdale, I am not aware that any answer was ever made to any of these fulminations, beyond an explanatory page or two in the Review itself.

The favourite censure was of the Review's severity; in which it was said to have a sincerity and a flippancy, which showed that condemnation was its enjoyment; and that its authors sought for distinction, not in the discovery and encouragement of merit, but in the detection and exposure of defects; and that, while rioting in the delight of their power, the interests of the victim were disregarded, and

that his agonies only enhanced the ridicule under which he suffered.

This charge is not altogether groundless; but the fault is one that adheres naturally to the position of a reviewer.

There is no offence to an author greater than the seeming contempt of silence, and therefore the very act of publishing is a petition for notice. And the critic, thus invited, assumes the censor's chair, and, concealed, has to examine, and to announce, the character of every book that stands before him for its doom. If the journal be in the hands of men skilled in the analytical art, the reviewer, who has the advantage of coming last, is often better acquainted with the matter of the book than its author; insomuch that, in many cases, the criticism is the abler work of the two. And it is always tolerably certain that there are many more who will, at first, take their opinions idly from the journal, rather than from the more laborious study of the original book. Thus, both from his situation and his talent, the critic, unless he be of a singularly considerate temperament, and on a very cool subject, naturally imbibes feelings of conscious superiority, not favourable to the exercise of candid judgment. Confidence in his own opinion, and thoughtlessness as to the sensations of authors, especially when he has really no desire to hurt them, are nearly inseparable from his position; and this tendency is immensely increased by the number of the occasions on which severity, and even scorn, are absolute duties. Then it does so happen that all human censors do prefer the discovery of faults.

Excellence is more easily found out; and it leads to mere praise. But he who detects a fault shows his superiority, at least to him who committed it; and its being a fault seems to confer a freer license of exposure. The critic therefore makes the most of it; not for the satisfaction of tormenting, but for the luxury of exercising his skill in that science, of which sarcasm and derision are the most popular displays. Blaming and exposing become arts; in which it is very tempting to excel; and for which readers are ready to pay more than for better matter. Different critics fall into this habit in different veins, and under different feelings. When Jeffrey gave way to it, it was generally from mere lightness of spirit. Totally devoid of ill nature, and utterly unconscious of any desire to hurt, he handled the book as a thing to be played with; without duly considering that the gay and moral pleasantry of Horace might produce as much distress as the declamatory weight of Juvenal. These critical vivacities, however unfortunate, being the natural tendencies of the reviewer's situation, the true question, in appreciating this part of the character of a critical work, is as to the *excess* in which the tendency has been indulged.

The answer to this question, in the case of the Edinburgh Review, is triumphant.

In spite of all its severity, there is no work of the kind where applause has been conferred more generously, or with more valuable illustrations of its grounds. Where else will the merits of the great writers, the great inventors, the great patriots, or

the great philanthropists, who shone during these twenty-seven years, be found by future ages so enthusiastically recorded? Detached expressions or opinions may be objected to; but, on the whole, the admirers of such eminence can found on no such powerful and judicious praise. If this be the fact, a work dedicated to the examination of the publications of the passing day, and consequently conducted under all the passing influences, may submit to the blame of occasional asperity. The Edinburgh Review incurred this blame at its outset, because its tone was new; and because, contrasted with the placid dotage of its predecessors, it was strong. But in time discussion showed its necessities, and supplied a decisive standard by which the supposed cruelty of this journal may be judged of. Other journals arose. *Which of them have been less cruel? Which of them has exhibited the virtues for the want of which the Edinburgh Review was blamed? Which of them has not surpassed it in all the iniquities of its justice? Which of them has practised less the art of giving pain?*

The literary and scientific errors of the work were sometimes accounted for by being ascribed to the personal antipathies of the editor, and its political ones to his anxiety, from selfishness, to serve the Whig party. These being charges of unkindness and dishonesty, may be safely left to the refutation afforded by the editor's character. Deducting the ordinary mistakes and exaggerations inseparable from warm discussion, he never published one sentence of his own that did not express his sincere opinion

at the time. Had he any personal unkindness towards Sir Walter?* Yet whose poetry did he

* The following letter from Scott to Jeffrey attests the familiar affection which, in spite of some sharp criticism on the poetry of the writer, ever subsisted between them.

Abbotsford, 5th August 1817.

My dear Jeffrey—I flatter myself it will not require many protestations to assure you with what pleasure I would undertake any book that can give you pleasure. But, in the present case, I am hampered by two circumstances; one, that I promised Gifford a review of this very Kirkton for the Quarterly; the other that I shall certainly be unable to keep my word with him. I am obliged to take exercise three or four hours in the forenoon, and two after dinner, to keep off the infernal spasms which, since last winter, have attacked me with such violence, as if all the imps that used to plague poor Caliban were washing, wringing, and ironing, the unshapely but useful bag which Sir John Sinclair treats with such distinction—my stomach, in short. Now as I have much to do of my own, I fear I can hardly be of use to you in the present case, which I am very sorry for, as I like the subject, and would be pleased to give my own opinion respecting the Jacobitism of the Editor, which, like my own, has a good spice of affectation in it, mingled with some not unnatural feelings of respect for a cause which, though indefensible in common sense and ordinary policy, had a great deal of high-spirited Quixotry about it. Can you not borrow from your briefs and criticism a couple of days to look about you here? I dare not ask Mrs. Jeffrey till next year, when my hand will be out of the mortar-tub; and at present my only spare bed was, till of late, but accessible by the feudal accommodation of a drawbridge made of two deals; and still requires the clue of Ariadne. Still, however, there it is, and there is an obliging stage-coach called the Blucher, which sets down my guests within a mile of my mansion (at Melrose bridge-end), three times a week, and restores them to their families in like manner after five hours' travelling. I am like one of Miss Edgeworth's heroines, master of all things in miniature—a little hill and a little glen,

review with less of the partiality of a friend? How many books written by persons he disliked were put into his crucible, yet came out all the brighter for his illustration of their merits! If the hope of personal advantage had affected his political writing, his clear course would have been to have given up the Review, or to have softened its tone. Nothing could be so bad for his personal interest, even as a politician, as what he did.

Of the charges against Jeffrey personally, none was more absurd or proclaimed with greater perseverance, than his treatment of the Lake Poets; whom he was said to have persecuted with ungenerous obstinacy. No answer to this can be more graceful or effective than his own:—"I have in my time said petulant and provoking things of Mr. Southey, and such as I would not say now. But I am not conscious that I was ever unfair to his poetry; and if I have noted what I thought its faults in too arrogant and derisive a spirit, I think I have never failed to give hearty and cordial praise to its beauties—and generally dwelt much more largely on the

and a little horse-pond of a loch, and a little river, I was going to call it—the Tweed, but I remember the minister was mobbed by his parishioners for terming it, in his Statistical Report, an inconsiderable stream. So pray do come and see me, and if I can stead you, or pleasure you, in the course of the winter, you shall command me. As I bethink me, I can contrive a bachelor bed for Thomson or Jo. Murray, if either of them will come with you; and if you ride, I have plenty of hay and corn, and a bed for your servant.—Ever yours affectionately, WALTER SCOTT.

Our posts are not very regular, so I was late in receiving yours. "

latter than the former. Few things, at all events, would now grieve me more than to think I might give pain to his many friends and admirers, by reprinting, so soon after his death, anything which might appear derogatory either to his character or his genius; and therefore, though I cannot say that I have substantially changed any of the opinions I have formerly expressed as to his writings, I only insert in this publication my review of his last considerable poem, which may be taken as conveying my matured opinion of his merits—and will be felt, I trust, to have done no scanty or unwilling justice to his great and peculiar powers."—(Contributions, vol. iii. p. 133.)

"I have spoken in many places rather too bitterly and confidently of the faults of Mr. Wordsworth's poetry; and forgetting that, even on my own view of them, they were but faults of taste, or venial self-partiality, have sometimes visited them, I fear, with an asperity which should be reserved for objects of moral reprobation. If I were now to deal with the whole question of his poetical merits, though my judgment might not be substantially different, I hope I should repress the greater part of these vivacities of expression; and indeed so strong has been my feeling in this way, that, considering how much I have always loved many of the attributes of his genius, and how entirely I respect his character, it did at first occur to me whether it was quite fitting that, in my old age and his, I should include in this publication any of those critiques which may have formerly given pain or offence to him or his ad-

mirers. But when I reflected that the mischief, if there really ever was any, was long ago done, and that I still retain, in substance, the opinions which I should now like to have more gently expressed, I felt that to omit all notice of them on the present occasion might be held to import a retractation which I am as far as possible from intending; or even be represented as a very shabby way of backing out of sentiments which should either be manfully persisted in or openly renounced, and abandoned as untenable."—Contributions, vol. iii. p. 233.)

Since, in the cases of these two most eminent of the school, he regrets his occasional unguardedness of language, but retains his opinions, the only thing to be considered is, whether the opinions be sound. This, however, is a mere matter of taste. But supposing them to be unsound, it is absolutely ludicrous to say that his errors are so gross as to imply unkindness,—which is the principal part of the charge. Where is the best stated praise of what is good in these poets to be found? Unquestionably in the Edinburgh Review. Accompanied, no doubt, with severe condemnation of their supposed faults. But is it not a fact, that, in so far as continued circulation is a criterion of permanent excellence, time is every day confirming almost all his poetical judgments? and particularly his judgments on the Lake Poets? Southey himself anticipates the day in which his admirers, though the wisest, are scarcely to exceed a dozen. *What poet whom Jeffrey condemns, continues a favourite with the public, except in*

the works, or in the passages, or in the qualities which he applauds?

The hatred of the political opinions of the work, is, in its original intensity, scarcely comprehensible now. The present age thinks with composure of such things as Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform, because they are settled. But forty years ago they were dreams;—favourite visions with philosophers;—but not within the horizon of any practical imagination. When those, therefore, whose ascendency, or whose conceptions of public tranquillity, were involved in the unquestioning belief that whatever was was right, saw their ark touched, they were struck with horror, and could impute what alarmed them to nothing but wickedness and intentional mischief. In these circumstances no prudence could have disarmed hostility. But, in place of uniform prudence, there did occur those occasional indiscretions, without which what periodical criticism of living things will ever be conducted? The irritability of authors, the terrors of honest Toryism, and the devotion of churches to themselves, might all have been sometimes more gently treated. Indifference to the prejudices of these parties raised more angry enemies to the Review than were raised by the deeper offences of its doctrines.

Its political offences all resolve into its despair of the war, and its recommendation of popular and economical reforms. It would be idle to answer objections which merely amount to this, that the objectors differ from the party objected to. For

every man by whom the public opinions of the Edinburgh Review were condemned, there was one other man, if not ten, by whom they were applauded. Discounting zealots on both sides, and appealing to those of impartial judgment, the great majority will concur in regretting occasional error, but in admiring general wisdom; and in acknowledging that the political improprieties of the Review were only such as always adhere to controversy, and that no party work ever urged its views with greater intelligence and purity. Since the editor and his associates thought the war hopeless, it was their duty to do what they could by argument, to convince the public that it ought to be brought to a close. Their opinion was that of many of the wisest men, and the best patriots, that we had. They must be judged of as at the time, and not after the bubble of Napoleon's ambition burst by its own expansion. Since they believed that the success of the Whigs was necessary for the safety of the country, ought they to have concealed this conviction, instead of advancing and anticipating the wisdom of coming parliaments?

In judging of the value of all such charges, as against the editor of a review, too little consideration is commonly given to the very peculiar position that he occupies. He is responsible for all that the work may contain, in certain senses, and to certain effects; but not at all in the same way that any honourable writer is for what he gives forth as his own composition, and as the expression of his own thoughts. No editor, depending on the co-operation of nume-

rous contributors, can be so. For even as controlling others, though armed with a pretty strong discretion, he is never altogether absolute. "We are growing (to Horner, 20th July 1810) too factious. I admit it, and it mortifies me as much as any one to think that we are. But you judge rightly of my limited power, and of the overgrown privileges of some of my subjects. I am but a feudal monarch at best, and my throne is overshadowed by the presumptuous crests of my nobles. However, I issue laudable edicts, inculcating moderation and candour, and hope in time to do some little good. A certain spice of aristocracy in my own nature withholds me from the common expedient of strengthening myself by a closer union with the lower orders; but I would give a great deal for a few chieftains of a milder and more disciplined character."

Bating these slight exceptions, we can only estimate our permanent obligations to the Edinburgh Review, when Jeffrey retired from it, by placing ourselves on the eminence of 1829, and looking back on the space between that point and the month of October 1802. It is nearly impossible even to count the useful intervening changes. A few of the more material ones stand out, and will for ever display themselves, as the great marks that attest the progress of the age. In 1802, dread of the people and a stern resistance of improvement, because it implied change, were the necessary, and often the only, qualifications for favour with the party in possession of power. The rights of religious toleration were so little understood, that several millions of the

population were subjected, on account of their creed, or their forms, to various important disabilities. We traded in human beings, under the protection of a great party, and of the law. Popular education was so utterly unknown to England, that the ignorance of the lower orders was considered as a positive recommendation. Ireland was in a state of disorderly barbarism; and, because it was peopled by Papists, this was thought its natural and its deserved condition. There was much hardness or indifference in public opinion; showing itself particularly in the severity of our dealings with all we had to punish or control,—the sailor or soldier, the criminal, the insolvent, the lunatic, and the young. The foundations of many parts of our public policy were hollow; or, where solid, what had been raised upon them was unsound; so that facility of revision was what was required; yet these defects were exactly what were successfully maintained to be the best parts of our policy. The mere elements of political economy were very sparingly known, except to a very small class. Some of the physical sciences, such as geology, were only arising, and all of them admitted of great improvement. The literary horizon was but beginning to glow with the brilliancy of its later great era. The public mind was in the bud; but, if not cherished, the blossom and the fruit might have been destroyed, or long delayed.

In the year 1829, all this was altered or mitigated. The alteration from youth to manhood, in an individual, is not more complete than the change that had taken place in the nation. That miserable

horror of change, which must in time reduce any country to idiocy, was duly abated; and novelty, though it never of itself became a recommendation, ceased to be a reproach, and conclusive. The Protestant dissenter and the Papist were emancipated. Nothing effectual was yet done for popular education; but the existing evil had been exposed; and we heard little of the praises of ignorance. The sad insanities of Ireland, which may still baffle a century of sound legislation, were not cured; but the folly of dealing with that as a doomed island, and the duty of trying to relieve its miseries, though self-inflicted, by justice and prudence, and the hope of the ultimate success of wise measures even on that people, came to be the habitual sentiments of parliaments and of public men. Our great crime of slavery was put down; and the many curses by which it will ever revenge itself upon any people that practise it were avoided. The light was admitted into many abuses, and many defects, in many parts of our polity, not excepting the fiscal and the legal, the most inscrutable and the best guarded of them all. The heart of the nation was softened. All the haunts, whether of penal or corrective control, of innocent or of guilty misery, were reformed by that pity which would have entered them in vain but for the improved humanity of the age. Commercial and kindred questions came to be solved by an application of the economical science to which they belong, and which lost by discussion much of its mystery, and became familiar to the ordinary thoughts of ordinary people. That exten-

sion of the elective franchise, without which it now seems certain that revolution could not have been long delayed, had not actually taken place; but it was close at hand. Campbell, Crabbe, Southey, Scott, Byron, Moore, and Wordsworth, had risen, and shone, and nearly passed away. But not till the true principles of poetical composition had been examined and applied to each. There never was a period in which such numerous and splendid contributions, moral and physical, were made to the treasury of public knowledge; and all of these were now discussed with no general and feeble expressions of praise or of blame, but with a degree of independence and talent, entering into the very heart of the matter, that gave people of all sides an assurance of being adequately instructed.

If there be a person who thinks that the condition of the people, and of our institutions and system, was better in 1802 than in 1829, and who, consequently, if he could, would go back to the earlier period, that person, of course, can feel no gratitude to the Edinburgh Review. But whoever exults in the dropping away of so many fetters, and in the improvement of so many parts of our economy, and in the general elevation of the public mind, must connect all these with the energy and intelligence of this journal. Not that many of these changes, or perhaps all of them, would not have taken place although this work had never existed; for, to a certain extent, they arose naturally out of the advance of a free community. But they certainly would not have occurred so soon, or so safely. There is scarcely

one abuse that has been overthrown, which, supported as every one was, might not have still survived, nor a right principle that has been adopted which might not have been dangerously delayed, had it not been for the well-timed vigour and ability of this Review. It was the established champion of the measures, and principles, and feelings, that have prevailed; and the glory of the victory cannot be withheld from the power that prepared the warriors who fought the battle.

It was not merely that the journal expounded and defended right principles and objects. Its prerogative was higher. It taught the public to think. It opened the people's eyes. It gave them, periodically, the most animated and profound discussions on every interesting subject, that the greatest intellects in the kingdom could supply. The mere mention of the names of a few of those who addressed the public through this organ during Jeffrey's editorship, is of itself sufficient to test the high character of the instruction given, and to guarantee its safety. How could a periodical work be but magnificent, of which it could be said that it was carried on by such men as the following, all in the full force of their powers, and each zealous on his favourite subject, viz.—Jeffrey, Smith, Horner, Brougham, Thomas Brown, Walter Scott, John Playfair, Hallam, Malcolm Laing, George Ellis, Wilberforce, Lord Melbourne, John Allen, Coleridge, Malthus, Payne Knight, Professor Leslie, J. Mackintosh, Daniel Ellis, Moore, Dr. John Gordon, Palgrave, Leigh Hunt, Romilly, Foscolo, Dr. Chalmers, Professor Wilson, J. R.

Macculloch, Empson, Dr. Arnold, Sir William Hamilton, Macaulay, Carlyle, Robert Grant, Hazlitt, Alexr. (Sanscrit) Hamilton, Thomas Campbell, Peter Elmsley, Phillimore, James Mill, Macvey Napier, Chenevix, Bloomfield, Sir H. Parnell, General William Napier. Many other bright stars might be added; but the sky that blazes with these constellations is bright enough. Their influence in illuminating the age may be ascertained by every man for himself. Let any regular reader of this Review recollect, and say how many of his opinions, and of the reasons for them, were formed from its successive articles; and how largely the feelings and principles that he now owns were breathed into him by its general spirit.

Thus the Review soared, from the very first, into a higher region, and became itself the principal work of the day. And while none of the successors it produced have found it expedient to avoid its form or its professional principles, all of them have prospered or failed just according to the success with which they have imitated its talent and independence. Read with admiration in every spot where English is known, it was crowned by the only remaining honour of being proscribed by every government to which free inquiry was dangerous.

Jeffrey's value as *Editor* was incalculable. He had not only to revise and arrange each number after its parts were brought together, but before he got this length, he, like any other person in that situation, had much difficult and delicate work to

perform. He had to discover, and to train, authors; to discern what truth and the public mind required; to suggest subjects; to reject, and, more offensive still, to improve, contributions; to keep down absurdities; to infuse spirit; to excite the timid; to repress violence; to soothe jealousies; to quell mutinies; to watch times; and all this in the morning of the reviewing day, before experience had taught editors conciliatory firmness, and contributors reasonable submission. He directed and controlled the elements he presided over with a master's judgment. There was not one of his associates who could have even held these elements together for a single year. The merit of getting so many writers to forego the ordinary jealousies of authors and of parties, and to write invisibly, and without the fame of individual and avowed publication, in the promotion of a work made up of unconnected portions, and assailed by such fierce and various hostility, is due to him entirely. He acquired it by his capacity of discussing almost any subject, in a conciliatory spirit, with almost any author; by the wisdom with which his authority was exercised; by the infusion of his personal kindness into his official intercourse; and his liberal and gentlemanlike demeanour. Inferior to these excellences, but still important, was his dexterity in revising the writings of others. Without altering the general tone or character of the composition, he had great skill in leaving out defective ideas or words, and in so aiding the original by lively or graceful touches, that reasonable authors were surprised and

charmed on seeing how much better they looked than they thought they would.

As a *writer*, his merits were of the very highest order. It may be doubted if there be a critical work in the English language, including such a variety of subject, superior to his Selected Contributions. But these are not nearly one half of what he gave the Review, and many of his finest articles are omitted. The general peculiarities of his productions are to be found in their reasoning wisdom, and their graceful composition. Amidst all the enlightened minds, and all the powerful writers, around him, he never fails to shine so brightly, that there is no other person the extinction of whose contributions would so deeply alter the character of the work. Whatever influence it had upon the age, that influence is to be more ascribed to him than to any other individual connected with it. This was not the result of his genius alone. The most gratifying part of his triumph is to be ascribed to his taste for happiness and goodness, and his love of promoting them. How delightful, because how true, is the statement of the feelings with which, after an interval of fourteen years from his retirement, he looks back on the object and the tendency of his personal contributions. "If I might be permitted further to state, in what particular department, and generally on account of what I should most wish to claim a share of those merits, I should certainly say that it was by having constantly endeavoured to combine ethical precepts with literary criticism, and earnestly sought to impress my readers

with a sense, both of the close connection between sound intellectual attainments, and the higher elements of duty and enjoyment; and of the just and ultimate subordination of the former to the latter. The praise, in short, to which I aspire, and to merit which I am conscious that my efforts were most constantly directed, is, that I have, more uniformly and earnestly than any preceding critic, made the moral tendencies of the works under consideration a leading subject of discussion, and neglected no opportunity, in reviews of poems and novels, as well as of graver productions, of elucidating the true constituents of human happiness and virtue; and combating those besetting prejudices and errors of opinion which appear so often to withhold men from the path of their duty, or to array them in foolish and fatal hostility to each other. I cannot, of course, do more, in this place, than *intimate* this proud claim. But for the proof, or at least the explanation of it, I think I may venture to refer to the greater part of the papers that follow."—(Preface to the Contributions.)

Edinburgh Academy.

I return from this (too long) digression, to the narrative of the facts of his life.

There was no educational establishment, except those for the education of the poor, in which he took a greater interest than in the Edinburgh Academy. This is a proprietary day school, instituted with the view of raising the quality and the tone of education, in its higher branches, for boys of all

classes. It was opened in 1824; Sir Harry Moncreiff invoking the divine aid, and Sir Walter Scott, and Mr. Henry Mackenzie senior, the patriarch of Scottish literature, addressing the assemblage. It had long the benefit of the powerful head-mastership of the Archdeacon John Williams, who now presides over the establishment at Llandovery; and it at present flourishes under the charge of the Rev. John Hannah of Oxford. It has realised all the expectations of its founders; and, besides being indisputably the best school in this country, it has indirectly improved all the other schools of the same class. If a correct account were taken, it would probably be found that, independently of other colleges, more of its pupils have gained honours at Oxford and Cambridge, than all the pupils of all the other schools in Scotland since the Edinburgh Academy began. Jeffrey was one of the original proprietors, and afterwards a director; and on the 30th of July 1830 he presided, and delivered the prizes, at the annual exhibition. No addresses to boys could be marked by better judgment or better feelings, than those delivered by him on this occasion. Thoroughly acquainted with their minds, he said everything that could rouse and direct their ambition.

Appointed Lord Advocate.

Relieved of the anxious and incessant labour of the Review, he expected that what remained of his life would be passed in comparative repose. But in December 1830, the Whigs came into office, and he, by pre-eminence, was appointed Lord Advocate.

This, in one unexpected moment, changed his whole habits, prospects, and avocations. He had hitherto lived entirely in Edinburgh, or its neighbourhood, enjoying his fame and popularity with his private friends,—an honourable and happy life. But he had now to interrupt his profession; to go into Parliament at alarming pecuniary risk; to forego the paradise of Craigcrook, and his delicious vacations, to pass many weary months, and these summer ones, in London; to be no longer the easy critic of measures, but their responsible conductor; and to be involved, without official training, in all the vexations of official business. These calamities he would have avoided if he could. But being assured that his party and the public were concerned, he submitted. After stating the dangers of his new situation to his niece, Miss Brown, he adds, "Now I do not say this in the way of whining, but only to let you see how good reason I have for being sincerely sick and sorry at an elevation for which so many people are envying, and thinking me the luckiest and most elevated of mortals for having attained."—(3d December 1830.)

He makes in this letter another very natural reflection,—"Will you not come to see us before we go? You will find me glorious in a flounced silk gown, and long cravat,—sending men to the gallows, and persecuting smugglers for penalties,—and every day in a wig, and most days with buckles on my shoes! I wish my father had lived to see this,—chiefly I hope, for the pleasure it would have given him, but partly too, I will avow, for the triumph I

should have had over all his sad predictions of the ruin I was bringing on my prospects by my Whig politics, and of the bitter repentance I should one day feel for not following his Tory directions—though it was but a hazard after all; and he had a fair chance of being right, as to worldly matters at least;—and so good night."

There is no situation, native to Scotland, of greater trust of dignity than that of Lord Advocate. Yet, as it is dealt with, it is not an office that a sensible man, considering his own interest alone, would desire to have. In so far as each is the legal adviser of the crown in their respective countries, the Lord Advocate is in Scotland something like the Attorney-General in England. But, practically, their positions are very different. The total official emoluments of the Lord Advocate are, on an average, not above £3000 a year; in addition to which, his only other reward, or hope of reward, consists in the chance of judicial promotion. His direct patronage is exceedingly slender, and for the patron, patronage is more of a torture than of a reward. For these considerations, he has to obtain a seat, or seats, in Parliament; which, between December 1830 and May 1832, cost Jeffrey about £10,000. Then he has to go to London, and to return so often, or to remain so long, that his practice is greatly injured, and generally extinguished. And as there is no Scotch Secretary, and Scotch matters, however simple, are very apt to be taken up as mysteries by those who do not choose to understand them, the general business of the country is thrown upon the

Lord Advocate, to an extent that, if attempted towards an Attorney-General, would quash him in a week. Horner says truly (in 1804), that the Lord Advocate, "in the management of elections, and General Assemblies, and town-councils, etc., has been hitherto no better than a sub-clerk in the Treasury,"—which he is of opinion was an unnecessary degradation.—(Memoirs, i. 269.) And this is not only the use to which the Lord Advocate is still far too much applied by Government; but every other party fancies that he is entitled to use him in the same way; and to hold him responsible, beyond his correct legal line, not only for the measures that he promotes, but for those that he opposes. If duly supported by his masters, he might withstand all this. But they, commonly knowing and caring little about the matter, have seldom much scruple in consulting their own comforts, and in trying to conciliate members by the sacrifice of their own officer; who cannot defend himself or his measure as an independent man, but must speak or be silent according to orders. The root of all this discord, vexation, and inefficiency, lies in expecting a professional gentleman not only to conduct affairs to which he has been accustomed, but to begin to act suddenly as a statesman, in matters to which he is necessarily new. This might have passed formerly, when there was very little Scotch public business, and the people were nobody,—and the principle was, no change; but it is absurd now. It has long been complained of by the people of this country, that no attention is bestowed on Scotch measures by Parliament. This

complaint is just. The evil arises partly from the ignorance of the Houses of what anything Scotch means, and partly from their indifference about anything desired by a portion of the empire that is too small and too quiet to create alarm; but still more, from the almost ostentatious disregard by Government of matters which, at the worst, can only cause a small and momentary mutiny among fifty-three not loquacious members. The only remedy is, the appointment of some person, probably holding another office, to manage the general, apart from the legal, affairs of the country, avowedly and responsibly; or, if this duty be kept upon the Lord Advocate, to give him due support, and far more authority. As it is, if an eminent lawyer, without parliamentary ambition, and with no taste for sweltering in London, but making a respectable income, and living at home in peace, wishes to be sleepless all night, and hot all day, and not half so useful as he might be, let him become Lord Advocate. The evil is aggravated by the consideration that the performance of his proper duties alone, while it would give ample occupation, would be agreeable and important. In addition to his being the legal adviser of the crown and of Government, no man can be idle who takes the management of our whole criminal business; provided it be continued to be managed so as to exhibit a conclusive precedent, and a model, for taking the duty of penal prosecution out of the hands of inferior officers and interested private parties, and committing it to the charge of a high and responsible public accuser. In August 1832, Jeffrey had a conference with the

late Earl Grey, then Prime Minister, in which, as Jeffrey states it, his lordship "promised to make some arrangement for relieving my office of a great part of its *political* duties, and reducing it to its true legal character, and something is even in progress for the practical accomplishment of this." But to this hour nothing has been done.

He was of opinion that, in the particular circumstances of the Scotch Bar, where there are few official honours, the situations of Dean and of Lord Advocate, or Solicitor-General, should not be monopolised by one person. Acting on this principle, he resigned the Deanship—which, on the 17th of December 1831, was conferred on Mr. Hope, who had so handsomely foregone his claim on the previous vacancy.

Jeffrey was fortunate in this, that when he came upon the parliamentary stage, he was not, at first, distracted by variety or perplexity of objects. For upwards of fifty years the Whig party in Scotland had, without one moment's diversity or relaxation, been demanding Parliamentary and Burgh Reform, as the two definite things that for this country were all in all. By the first, they meant that, under whatever safeguards, the constitutional principle of popular representation should be extended to Scotland; by the second, that an end should be put to the insulting absurdity of all town-councils being self-elected. These were also English objects—in the wake of which the Scotch ones were sure to follow; but the Scotch cases were infinitely stronger. Putting down these two evils was essential and pre-

liminary to any good whatever being done to this country. Though the new Lord Advocate, therefore, had soon no want of lesser projects and distractions, these were the two forts that had first to be gained.

Hence, though scarcely any Lord Advocate had entered public life in a more important or hazardous season, there have been few whose official proceedings it is less necessary to follow. He was only in office about three years and a half, and it took nearly the whole of that time to get these two measures carried. Their adjustment to Scotland presented its own difficulties, and gave rise to its own discussions; but such details are unimportant after they are settled; and in the main schemes the northern part of the island was identified with the southern. The principle of reform was no sooner recognised by Government and the legislature, than it was succeeded by its practical applications—which implied a plentiful crop of proposals; but though within the first projection of these changes, he was withdrawn before he could become officially responsible for their success, or their defeat. No important improvement, therefore, of the Lord Advocate's own, did, or could, distinguish his official reign. His merit resolves into the manner in which he managed the two great measures that were committed, in a certain degree, to his charge; and this admits of no explanation that could be interesting, or perhaps even intelligible, to those who were not engaged in the conflict.

Though he would much rather have stayed at

home, he had never any aversion to a visit to London. He had many friends there in all classes, among whom he was very popular; and he delighted to whet his intellect against the great intellects of the capital, and to observe the varied society to which his reputation, and his conversational powers, introduced him. Whenever he was there, he wrote to me almost daily, owing partly to my being Solicitor-General under him. These letters contain lively accounts of all his proceedings and feelings. The interesting persons he met with —his social parties— his occasional retreats to the country—every shadow of change in public affairs—striking parliamentary occurrences and speeches—the whole incidents of the London scene—are given with a vivacity and talent which Lady M. W. Montagu might have envied. But these communications can be only very sparingly disclosed. They have already, in many places, become immaterial and obscure; in others they touch living individuals; and in many, and these the most valuable, they imply confidence. But in so far as they are merely personal, they enable me to let him describe those personal occurrences himself, with which alone I have now to deal.

Parliamentary Life.

Within a few weeks after his elevation, he was returned member for what were termed the Forfarshire Burghs; on which occasion he had the honour of being pelted by what he calls "*The brutes of Forfar*," being a gang of blackguards who thought

that this was a good way of promoting the cause of his opponent. But there was a flaw in the proceedings which soon unseated him. He had only got the return by the vote of the Dundee delegate, and this burgh having been previously disfranchised, it was ultimately decided that it had no right to vote. But as the judgment of disfranchisement was under appeal he was advised to take his seat till the appeal should be disposed of.

And so he was in office, and in Parliament. "I come into public life in stormy weather, and under no very enviable auspices, except that our *cause*, and our *meaning*, are good."—(To Richardson, 27th July 1831.)

The Reform Bill was propounded on the 1st of March 1831. Three days thereafter he made his first speech. "I have proposed to speak twice, but could never get in. I think I must to-night. But not a word has yet been said as to Scotland, nor do I think the house would bear three sentences on that insignificant subject. I must therefore go into the general question."—(To me, 4th March 1831.) He did so, in a speech of which Mackintosh says, "Macaulay and Stanley have made two of the finest speeches ever spoken in Parliament. Jeffrey's, though not quite so debating and Parliamentary, was quite as remarkable for argument and eloquence. No man of fifty-five* ever began a new career so well."—(Memoirs, ii. 479.) This speech was published immediately afterwards, at the special request of Government, and made a strong im-

* He should have said above fifty-seven.

pression on those who really wished to understand the question. It is certainly general, and too much above the common grapple of parliamentary contention; but out of the whole speeches that were delivered throughout the two years that the question was discussed, no better argument in favour of the principle and necessity of the measure, on its general grounds, is extractable. Still, as a debating speech, it fell below the expectations both of his friends and of himself; and the chief cause to which he used to ascribe the disappointment, was his constant dread, on his throat's account, of the physical effort of speaking.

On the 17th of March the House of Lords affirmed the judgment disfranchising Dundee, and this left him little chance with the committee. "The Chancellor has affirmed Dundee. So that card is lost, and we are all the worse for the committee. I think things look ominous on the whole with me; and I have little other comfort than that I always anticipated a bad result, and went into the matter deliberately, and with my mind made up to the worst. I only hope I shall not be found frivolous, and vexatious, and saddled with the enemies' costs, and that I shall escape disqualification by bribery."—(To me, 17th March 1831.) He soon struck his colours, and was unseated. "Rutherfurd, I believe, has told you the tragic history of my committee. I bear the result, as I am bound to do, manfully; chiefly, I believe, because I foresaw the likelihood of it from the hour that I first entered on my canvass, and have never much expected any-

thing else. It is plain, however, that it will never do to make a poor Scotch lawyer pay his own way into parliament three times in one year."—(To me, 28th March 1831.)

Lord Fitzwilliam let him have his burgh of Malton; for which he was elected on the 6th of April. His journey there was without Mrs. Jeffrey and his daughter, and therefore it seems to have made him pensive. "Here I am, near half-way to Edinburgh, and yet not on my way to Edinburgh! Oh! this lovely view on the *home* road brings that home so painfully before me, and gives such a pull at the heart that it requires all admonitions of duty and ambition, and everything, to prevent me from running on desperately down a steep place, and landing at Craigcrook. I left town yesterday early, and got to Lord Milton's to dinner, where I stayed till this morning; a very fine old place, and a most agreeable family of the quiet, natural, benevolent English aristocracy. I am afraid we have nothing of the sort in Scotland, and yet in England I could rather say it is the most common character of the first rank. I am on my road, you are aware, for Malton, where I shall be at mid-day to-morrow; and I hope elected on Wednesday or Thursday. I must actually visit 600 people, it seems, and go to the open market-place on a staid horse, and make a discourse from the saddle, under the canopy of heaven, rain or fair weather. This is penalty enough, I think, without having to pay £500 for feeding this punctilious constituency." "It has been a long lonely day, and I feel something desolate in the solitude of mine

inn. It was very bright and cheery however, and the green hedges, and fields full of bleating lambs, were soothing after the long fever of London. I have not had so much time to recollect myself since I left home."—(To me, Ferrybridge, 5th April 1831.)

He was elected on the 6th of April, but within a fortnight Parliament was dissolved. This event was the consequence of ministers, after a debate of two nights, being in a minority of about eight, on a motion by General Gascoigne, that the number of the members of the House of Commons be not *diminished.* Jeffrey never spoke so indignantly as he did against the conduct of most of the Scotch members on this occasion; and these representatives were warned "*emphatically*" by Government, that by supporting this motion they extinguished all hope of obtaining their additional members. "Ireland (Jeffrey writes) was far more true to duty;" but the opposition Scotch members all voted for the motion, "and in fact decided the question." The view of these persons was that throwing the Reform Bill out, was, in their opinion, more important than obtaining more members for Scotland, and this does not seem very unreasonable. But Jeffrey is anxious that their "*unspeakable baseness* should be known and proclaimed in Scotland;" and I mention this as almost the solitary, but rather a refreshing exception to the usual gentleness of his political malediction.

After mentioning the plots and speculations connected with the sudden close of the attempt to work

reform out of the unreformed Parliament, he says—"It was a beautiful, rosy, dead calm morning when we broke up a little before five to-day; and I took three pensive turns along the solitude of Westminster Bridge; admiring the sharp clearness of St. Paul's, and all the city spires soaring up in a cloudless sky, the orange red light that was beginning to play on the trees of the Abbey, and the old windows of the Speaker's house, and the flat, green mist of the river floating upon a few lazy hulks on the tide, and moving low under the arches. It was a curious contrast with the long previous imprisonment in the stifling roaring House, amidst dying candles, and every sort of exhalation."—(To Mr. Thos. Thomson, 20th April 1831.)

Parliament was prorogued on the 22d of April, "after a scene of bellowing, and roaring; and gnashing of teeth, on the part of the adversary, in both Houses, which it was almost frightful to look at," and next day it was dissolved.

He was naturally ambitious to represent his native city. But believing it to be hopeless under the system then existing, he would not have made the attempt, had it not been that, without his knowledge, a canvass was begun for him, which he did not think it proper to resist. Its result was perfectly descriptive of what was formerly called election in this country. His opponent was Robert Adam Dundas, Esq., now Mr. Christopher, in whose favour, however, I believe that no body beyond the town-council, came publicly forward. Almost all the public bodies petitioned the council in favour of Jeffrey, and a petition to the

same effect was voted at a public meeting of the inhabitants, on a Saturday about three o'clock; which petition was signed by next Monday evening by about 17,400 persons. On the succeeding day, being Tuesday the 3d of May 1831, the thirty-one or thirty-two individuals, composing the town-council met in a room to choose the member. They began by reading all these applications; and then, by a majority of seventeen to fourteen, elected Mr. Dundas. This was the last general election at which any Scotch town-council had it in its power to perform the elective farce.

He was chosen for the Perth burghs towards the beginning of June—the same burghs as before; but it did not now depend upon Dundee.

Being blamed, a little after this, by some who did not duly consider his situation, for want of decision, and for conceding too much to artful opponents, he defended himself by saying, "A thousand thanks for your hints as to my infirmities. You might have made them twice as bad with perfect safety. I am rather afraid to promise amendment, but I boldly promise never to be moved to anything but gratitude by having the course of amendment pointed out to me." "When the decision rests with myself, I ought probably to be more prompt and decided. But when I have in substance only to propose and report for others, I rather think that I ought to hear all, and discuss with all. And I know that many people have complained that I do not discuss enough, and that I am too peremptory and intractable, and I have even

received hints to this effect from the minority, to whom the dissatisfied have carried their supplications." "It is very well for you and ——— to say that you adhere to the original arrangement of the bill, and that all the objections to it are nonsense. I must hear and discuss all those objections, and I cannot say to the minority that they are nonsense, for they are very much moved by them, and want me to obviate them by more decisive arguments than can always be produced."—(To me, 23d June 1831.)

Notwithstanding all this, the scold was not ill deserved. His own constant sincerity and reasonableness made him always incredulous of the opposite qualities in others; and hence his having more charity for cunning enemies, than toleration for honest friends, was an infirmity that too often beset him.

On the 1st of July 1831 he brought in the Scotch Reform Bill, "with a very few words of explanation. I was strictly enjoined to avoid going into any discussion, and indeed *had a written order from* ——— *to move for leave without saying a single word.*"—(To me, 2d July 1831.)

Politically the two bills were the same. They differed only in phraseology and machinery. But there was a short period, during the preparation of the Scotch one, when there was an imagination of making our franchise higher by five, or even by ten, pounds, than that for England, which was supported by some of the leading reformers in this country, and a fifteen-pound franchise had, at one

time, the countenance even of the Lord Advocate. This was not because he, or they, thought the English ten-pound qualification too low; but because they thought that raising it for Scotland would facilitate the passing of the Scotch bill, and that, for this country, a fifty, or even a hundred, pound franchise was at least better than none. They were wrong even in this view, which was vehemently resisted by others, and by none with more effective vigour than by Sir John H. Dalrymple;* and Government settled the matter on the principle that the franchise must, in this respect, be the same in both kingdoms.

Giving an account of the second night's debate on the second reading of the English Bill, he says, "No division last night, as I predicted, and not a very striking debate. A curious series of prepared speeches, by men who do not speak regularly, and *far* better expressed than nine-tenths of the good speeches, but languid and inefficient from the air of preparation and the want of nature and authority with which they were spoken. There was but one exception, and it was a brilliant one. I mean *Macaulay*, who surpassed his former appearance in closeness, fire, and vigour, and very much improved the effect of it by a more steady and graceful delivery. It was prodigiously cheered, as it deserved, and I think puts him clearly at the head of the great speakers, if not the debaters, of the House." "I once meant to have said something, but I now think it impossible. Besides, Mackintosh

* Now Earl of Stair.

and Macaulay have taken all my ideas, and I cannot stoop to reclaim them; but we shall see. It is very hot, though very beautiful; and would be the most delicious weather in the world at Craigcrook, or Lochlomond, to which last region I wander oftenest in my dreams. We have not been very dissipated lately. We were at a grand party at the Staffords' the other night, and I have had two or three more cabinet dinners. The most agreeable are Lord Grey's, where there are always ladies, and we were very gay there last Sunday. I am still as much in love with Althorpe, and most of his colleagues, as ever, and feel proud and delighted with their frankness, cheerfulness, and sweet-blooded courage."—(To me, 6th July 1831.)

He frequently met with Mr. Wordsworth this spring; and as some people fancy that he had a rude unkindness towards all the Lakers, it is proper to mention that Wordsworth and he, whenever they happened to be in each other's company, were apparently friends. There was certainly no want of friendly feeling on Jeffrey's part; nor, it is to be hoped, on Mr. Wordsworth's, though possibly it was somewhat chilled by the recollection of what he may have supposed to be past injustice. But if he had any such thoughts, he had too much kindness and politeness to show them. In a letter to Mrs. Echersall—27th March 1831, Jeffrey says,—"I dined yesterday at Mackintosh's, with Wordsworth the poet, and Shiel the Irish orator, and several other remarkable persons. Wordsworth and I were great friends. He and Empson and I stayed two

good hours after everybody else had gone, and did not come home till near two." Giving an account of the same meeting in another letter, he says—"Did I tell you that I met Wordsworth at Mackintosh's last week, and talked with him in a party of four till two in the morning. He is not in the very least Lakish now, or even in any degree poetical, but rather a hard and a sensible worldly sort of a man."—(To me, 30th March 1831.)

Nobody seems to have struck him with such admiration as Lord Althorpe. "There is something to me quite delightful in his calm, clumsy, courageous, immutable probity and well-meaning, and it seems to have a charm for everybody."—(To me, 13th February 1831.)

He refreshed himself during these turmoils by as many retreats to the country as he could make. "I am just going to a conference with Melbourne at the Home Office, which has forced me to give up the refreshment of a rural day at Greenwich, which I had promised myself, and for the sake of which I had declined all engagements this Saturday. But he has maliciously named four o'clock, and cut through all our innocent schemes. These are the things which give one most the feeling of bondage."—(To me, 16th July 1831.)

He spoke on one of the stages of the bill on the 15th of July 1831. "I spoke a little last night, but my voice was too weak for so full and stirring a House. I have always said that I was most afraid of that infirmity; and unless they are unusually quiet, I am aware that I cannot make myself generally

heard; which is very provoking."—To me, 16th July 1831.)

In September 1831 he moved the second reading of the Scotch Bill in a speech which I heard, and I was not struck with any vocal deficiency; but the House, to be sure, was perfectly quiet. It was an excellent speech, and very well received. But he was plainly under great restraint, and, except in sense and clearness, it was little calculated to give strangers any idea of his powers.

He began to suffer soon after this from an attack, which confined him for several weeks, and required a painful operation. "Tell ——— that I am no better, but that I bear my sufferings like a lamb, though I cannot help bleating a little now and then. I have lost quantities of blood, and a good deal of flesh, and all to no purpose, and have come to the creed that continual pain is a far worse evil than a bad conscience, a bad character, or even disappointment in love; to say nothing of the more ideal ills of a bad government, a bad climate, or an empty purse. I beg the aid of your prayers, and am always yours affectionately."—(To me, 3d October 1831.)

Yet even in this situation, his humanity alarmed him for the consequences of the bill being thrown out by the Peers. "For God's sake keep the people quiet in Scotland. I have written edifying letters to the sheriffs of the manufacturing counties, and some additional troops have, on my earnest request, been sent among us. Nothing in the world would do such fatal mischief as riot and violence, ending, as it *now* must do, in lavish bloodshed—from which

my soul recoils. I am suffering more pain than I could wish to an anti-reformer." "I am very much reduced in flesh and strength; but feeling my head and my heart whole enough in my intervals of pain. It has been a sharp martyrdom; but it is shabby in me disturbing my kind friends so much about it, and the expressions in your letter make me almost scorn myself for distressing you. It is far more cheering to me to think of you, gay and comfortable, than even for a moment sad on my account."—(To me, 15th October 1831.)

Parliament was prorogued on the 20th of October; but he was too ill to come home, and in the beginning of November went to Wimbledon. I advised him to apply his leisure on various Scotch matters which seemed to require legislation. The principal of these were the Poor Law, Education, the Law of Evidence, and the Police. He was not disposed, however, to meddle with more than he had already on hand—especially "as the misfortune is, that Government will not take the trouble to understand anything merely Scotch, and is therefore never cordial nor resolute."—(1st November 1831.) Every one of these matters has been operated upon by Parliament since.

"I am delighted with this place (Wimbledon). It is much colder than London, but dry and bright. Fine old trees, skirting a bright green common, in tufts and masses; some shining ponds glistening in the turf; a boundless horizon, with the Richmond woods on one side, and the Surrey hills on the other; a gay but quiet village, sinking into the wood, and

a garland of large shady villas sweeping in a full crescent round a broad bay of the common; a nice, dry, airy house; with a garden of smooth turf and broad gravel walks, backed up with evergreens and thick wood. I have brought a good store of books, and read with voracious delight. I am even voracious at dinner; and have my carriage and horses. In short, if it were not for that old pain, which is the devil and Satan, I should be very happy, and by God's grace I hope to get the mastery over it in due time. Mrs. J. and Charley (his daughter) are in ecstasy at having at last escaped from that stifling noisy London; and run about like your boys at Bonaly in the first days of vacation."—(To me, 4th November 1831.)

Parliament met again early in December. On the 17th of that month, ministers had a great majority on the second reading of the bill. "The debate, on the whole, was not interesting. —— made a most impertinent, unfair, and petulant speech, but with passages of great cleverness. Macaulay made, I think, the best he has yet delivered; the most condensed at least, and with the greatest weight of matter. It contained the only argument indeed to which any of the speakers who followed him applied themselves. There was a very running fire of small calibres, all the early part of yesterday. But there were in the end three remarkable speeches,—first, a mild, clear, authoritative vindication of the *measure*, upon broad grounds, and in answer to general imputations, by Lord John Russell; delivered with a louder voice, and more decided manner than usual

with him. Next a magnificent, spirited, and most eloquent speech by Stanley—chiefly in castigation of —— whom he trampled in the dirt, but containing also a beautiful and spirited vindication of the whole principle and object of Reform. This was by far the best speech I have heard from Stanley, and I fancy much the best he has ever made. It was the best, too, I must own, in the debate; for though Macaulay's was more logical and full of thought, this was more easy, spirited, and graceful. The last was Peel's, which, though remarkable, was not good," etc. —(To me.)

In a few days after this he thought himself almost sufficiently rewarded for having taken office, by the power which it gave him of obtaining one of the principal clerkships in the Court of Session for George Joseph Bell. He would have made him a judge if there had been a vacancy; and certainly no man had ever a stronger claim, so far as such claims depend on eminent fitness, than Mr. Bell had for a seat on that bench, which his great legal work had been instructing and directing for above thirty years.

Jeffrey wrote something in jest to Lord Holland, who was going to visit the King at Brighton, about the Scotch and the year 1745. In a few days he saw his Lordship after his return. "He says he won five-and-sixpence from the King at cribbage, and was sent to bed at eleven o'clock. Can you conceive anything more innocent or primitive? a king playing eagerly for sixpences! He tells me he also read to his Majesty the letter I wrote him about a

new *rebellion* in Scotland, if the bills were not passed, and with very good effect! The King condescended to observe that there was a *Scotticism* in the letter—viz., the use of the word *misgive* for *fail* or *miscarry*, which I do not think a Scotticism; but who will dispute with a king? For all this we are not easy."—(To me, 2d February 1832.)

He met Talleyrand at Holland House, and gives this account of him:—"He is more natural, plain, and reasonable, than I had expected; a great deal of the repose of high breeding and old age, with a mild and benevolent manner, and great calmness of speech, rather than the sharp, caustic, cutting speech of a practised utterer of *bons mots*. He spoke a great deal of old times and old persons, the Court of Louis XVI. when Dauphin, his coronation, Voltaire, Malsherbe, Turgot; with traditional anecdotes of Massillon and Bossuet, and many women of these days, whose names I have forgotten, and a good deal of diplomatic anecdote, altogether very pleasing and easy. He did not eat much, nor talk much about eating, except only that he inquired very earnestly into the nature of *cocky-leekie*,* and wished much to know whether *prunes* were essential. He settled at last that they should be boiled in the soup, but not brought up in it. He drank little but iced water."—(To me, 5th February 1832.)

The following is part of his account of the second reading of the Reform Bill in the Lords (14th April 1832):—"As I did not get to bed till near eight this morning (and was out again at eleven),

* A Scotch soup.

after fourteen hours' starving in the Lords, you cannot expect a long or a lively letter from me. You will see we had a majority of nine, being one more than anybody can account for. The debate was not very brilliant, but got, in its latter stage, excessively interesting. The Chancellor more tranquil, and less offensive, than usual, but not at all languid, and in very good voice throughout, chiefly correcting false representations, dispelling vain terrors, and arranging and soothing. Lyndhurst's by far the cleverest and most dangerous speech against us in the debate, and very well spoken. Lord Grey's reply on the whole admirable; in tone and spirit perfect, and, considering his age and the time, really astonishing. He spoke near an hour and a half, after five o'clock, from the kindling dawn into full sun-light, and I think with great effect. The aspect of the House was very striking through the whole night, very full, and, on the whole, still and solemn (but for the row with Durham and Phillpots, which ended in the merited exposure of the latter). The whole throne and the space around it clustered over with 100 members of our House, and the space below the bar (which, since the galleries which are constructed over the grand entrance, is also left entirely for us) nearly filled with 200 more, ranged in a standing row of three deep along the bar, another sitting on the ground against the wall, and the space between covered with moving and sitting figures in all directions, with twenty or thirty clambering on the railings, and perched up by the doorways. Between four

and five, when the daylight began to shed its blue beams across the red candle-light, the scene was very picturesque, from the singular grouping of forty or fifty of us sprawling on the floor, awake and asleep, in all imaginable attitudes, and with all sorts of expressions and wrappings. '*Young Cadboll*,' who chose to try how he could sleep *standing*, jammed in a corner, fell flat down over two prostrate Irishmen on the floor, with a noise that made us all start, but no mischief was done. The candles had been renewed before dawn, and blazed on after the sun came fairly in at the high windows, and produced a strange, but rather grand effect, on the red draperies and furniture and dusky tapestry on the walls. Heaven knows what will become of it."—(To me, 14th April 1832.)

The bill was thrown out by the Peers in May. This led to a resignation of ministry, which was thus announced to me, 9th May 1832:—"Well, my dear C., we are all out! and so ends the first act of our comedy. God grant that it may not fall too soon into the tragic vein. The fact is not generally *known* yet (I am now writing to you about noon); but it is surmised, and before six o'clock it will be announced in Parliament. I went to Althorpe at ten o'clock to ask, and had a characteristic scene with that most honest, frank, true, and stout-hearted of all God's creatures. He had not come down stairs, and I was led up to his dressing-room, where I found him sitting on a stool, in a dark duffle dressing-gown, with his arms (very rough and hairy) bare above the elbows, and his beard half-

shaved, and half staring through the lather, with a desperate razor in one hand, and a great soap brush in the other. He gave me the loose finger of the brush hand, and with the usual twinkle of his bright eye and radiant smile, he said,—'You need not be anxious about your Scotch Bill for to-night, for I have the pleasure to tell you *we are no longer his Majesty's Ministers.*' It is idle to speculate on the coming events; though events will come, and *offences* too, and woe most probably to those through whom they come. Nor is it much wiser to look backward now, except for the consolation of not having, at all events, been shabby or mercenary, and the other comfort (for it is really one now) of never having been sanguine." "In the meantime, do what you can to *keep peace*, and with your last official breath exhort and conjure lovers of liberty to be lovers of order and tolerance. I tremble for Scotland, and think there is greater hazard there than in any other quarter."

In his horror of popular commotion, and anticipating the formation of a government resolved to dissolve, and not to reform, he draws the following picture:—"It will only require twelve or fifteen desperate men to be got together in a room—a Chancellor and Home Secretary to be created—a commission made for proroguing Parliament at two o'clock, and a proclamation for dissolving it for the Evening Gazette—an insulting answer proposed to the address of the Commons—and the country is on fire before Sunday morning; ay—inextinguishable fire, though blood should be poured out on it like water! Then

would follow the dispersion of unions and meetings, and petitions by soldiery; and vindictive burnings; and massacres of anti-reformers, in all the manufacturing districts; and summary arrests of men accused of sedition and treason; and shoals of prosecutions for libels, followed by triumphant acquittals; and elections carried through amidst sanguinary tumults; and finally, a House of Commons returned to put down that brutal administration, but *too late* to stay the torrent it had created. There is a scene for you!!"—(To me, 17th May 1832.)

To those who think the loss of political power the greatest of all misfortunes, the following account of one man's resignation under that calamity may be useful. "Lord Althorpe has gone through all this with his characteristic cheerfulness and courage. The day after the resignation he spent in a great sale garden, choosing and buying flowers, and came home with five great packages in his carriage, devoting the evening to studying where they should be planted in his garden at Althorpe, and writing directions and drawing plans for their arrangement. And when they came to summon him to a counsel on the Duke's giving in, he was found in a closet with a groom, busy oiling the locks of his fowling-pieces, and lamenting the decay into which they had fallen during his ministry."—(To me, 21st May 1832.)

Ministry being replaced within a week, he proceeded with the Scotch Bill; but "my reason for speaking little is, that I have no voice to ensure a hearing; and, to-day, I am sorry to say that it is

worse than usual, which, as I must go on with my Reform Bill, is very provoking."—(21st May 1832.) However, it seems that no voice was quite sufficient, because "Lord Althorpe desired me to say nothing at moving (the second reading), and, as there was to be no division, he said it was not regular to reply."—(22d May 1832.)

A personal, and political, and well-qualified, friend of his own being a candidate for a chair in one of our colleges, he says (4th June 1832)—"Unless ——— sends good medical credentials, he certainly will *not* be appointed. I have had some talk with Lord Melbourne about it, who says, that to job a teaching chair in a great medical school would be *disgraceful*, and that he will not give it to any man because he is a Whig, unless he be the best, or among the best, in all respects; and who shall say otherwise?

The Scotch Bill passed the Commons about midnight on the 27th of June 1832.

This did not end his anxieties, but it greatly relieved them. It left little beyond the general principle of the measure to be discussed, and this was virtually settled by the English case; though there were some persons, and even in high places, who wished to protract the struggle, on the curious ground that though the representation of England had been reformed, that of Scotland had better continue as it was. But this could not disturb him, and the intrigues and discussions and wranglings that had agitated the preceding eight months, were virtually at an end. Being the official manager of

the measure, he, like every one else in that position, had to resist the most opposite proposals, both from friendly and from hostile quarters, and was blamed accordingly. For example, he was loudly condemned for leaving each of the two adjoining shires of Peebles and Selkirk, one with about 12,000, and the other with about 8000 inhabitants, with a member, and for giving only one member to Orkney and Shetland jointly, these two islands being separated by one hundred miles of tempestuous sea, and the people in each amounting to above thirty thousand. And still more wildly was he attacked for having introduced a members' qualification clause, which was a novelty in this country, into the Scotch Bill. But the truth is, and this was explained, uselessly at the time, that he opposed all these provisions. The qualification clause, indeed, which at first applied to towns as well as shires, he resisted almost to the extent of resigning; and when this part of the statute was altered, Lord Althorpe stated in the House, that "he took blame to himself for not having had more regard to the advice and mediation of the Lord Advocate." Many similar examples might be given.* They are common to all men in his position.

His reflections on getting the measure through the Commons were these:—"It is odd how strangely I felt as I walked home alone last night after all was over. Instead of being elated or relieved,

* A Scandinavian put forth a fierce pamphlet which seemed to be directed chiefly against the atrocity of his native Shetland being called Zetland in the Bill.

I could not help feeling a deep depression and sadness, and I rather think I dropped a tear or two, as I paused to interrogate my own feelings in St. James' Square. I cannot very well explain this, but a sense of the littleness and vanity even of those great contentions, was uppermost in my mind. I have ever since had a most intense longing to get home, and when so many of my fellow members now think themselves free, and are preparing to set off to-morrow or next day, it seems peculiarly hard on me to be chained for two or three weeks longer. I trust, however, it will be no more, and then I shall have some summer to enjoy yet. I hunger and thirst for another view of Loch Lomond and my Highlands, and hope to meet you at Glenfinnart* before grouse has become common. Do for me what you can with the citizens, and let me know what is wanted on my part."—(To me, 28th June 1832.)

The bill passed the Lords on the 12th of July. On coming from a long night's work in the Commons that day, this scene was presented:—"It was a most lovely, warm, rosy, dead calm morning, when we broke up; and the perfect reflection of all the towers and trees on the water, with the fresh, crisp solidity of the unmoving foliage, in that glorious metallic light, made up a magnificent scene."—To me, 13th July 1832.)

At the eleventh hour, and when on the very eve of the royal assent, his patience was severely tried by the fancied discoveries of eager and captious friends, who pretended to groan over the bill, and to predict

* Where Lord Fullerton was living.

its entire failure, because their new and confident nonsense had not been foreseen and provided against. "Certainly there is an alacrity in *fault-finding* among some of our friends, which, but for the actual experience of it, I should not have thought possible; and then so fierce, and conceited, and infallible. I do not know two such provoking, wrong-headed, unmanageable fools, as the said ——, and ——; and wish to God they would kill each other, and deliver us from the intolerable plague of their counsels."

The lamented illness of Sir Walter Scott, who was not in a condition either to act as Sheriff of Selkirkshire, under the Reform Bill, or to appoint a substitute, or to resign, made it necessary to pass a statute enabling the Crown to appoint an interim sheriff to act during his incapacity. This was all arranged with Sir Walter's friends; and no one who knew Jeffrey could doubt the affectionate tenderness with which he would perform the sad duty of moving the bill. Nevertheless, it has been said that he was actuated by a desire to have an office to give away! Mr. Lockhart has explained the true facts, as the best answer to "a statement *highly unjust and injurious;*" and adds, that when "Mr. Jeffrey introduced his bill in the House of Commons, he used language so graceful and touching, that both Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Croker went across the House to thank him cordially for it."—(Life of Scott, chap. 83.)

Parliament having adjourned with a view to dissolution, he proceeded homewards. "It is beautiful weather, only too hot. I hope to dine in the cool

groves of Roehampton with the Mintos to-morrow, and then turn my face to the fresh air of the north. There is a spring and a bracing in the very thought of it." "And so ends the chronicle of this session, ever memorable, and destined, I trust, to be of blessed memory to all future generations, though it closes in tears, and amidst signs of times which are big with anxiety and alarm."—(To me, 10th August 1832.) "A lovely day; and I feel that I shall revive when I meet the bracing air of the north. Yet there is some pang in leaving one's house of a year; and the loneliness of London and its outskirts has rather a melancholy air this morning."—(12th August 1832.)

EDINBURGH ELECTION.

He came here in the middle of August 1832, and remained till Parliament met again in February 1833. His chief object now was to be returned to the first Reformed Parliament by his native city. But even this ambition did not fire him, as it would have done some excited candidates. "—— annoys me by stating that I should not *lose a moment in coming down* to canvass. Now, first, I cannot possibly stir till our bill is through the Lords, as well as the Commons; there being no one man on our side who knows anything of the history or detail of the measure, or could give any explanation as to many points liable enough to be misunderstood, and even, I fear, rashly abandoned. In the next place, I have the greatest horror, if I were even free to move at such a call, at the idea of running about begging the

votes of 10,000 or 12,000 people, and counterfeiting great pride and eagerness, when all the time I would give a good round sum to be honourably rid of the House. And lastly, as I stand solely from public necessity, and to oblige or obey my political friends on the spot, I do think it reasonable that they should arrange and take the charge of the canvass for me, being a thing for which I have no manner of genius or stomach at the present moment. I hope this will not appear unreasonable or selfish. It may show more indifference on the subject than would be wise to confess to electors, but not a bit more, nor indeed, half so much, as I feel. I do not find it is expected that I should put forth either a profession of faith or a humble supplication for support. Nor, on the other hand, do I hear of any requisition or invitation proposed to be addressed to me. But upon all that, I put myself in your hands, and give you power either to address the electors in my name, or to intimate, in answer to any requisition, that I am willing to be indebted to their support," etc. etc. His associate in this object was the Hon. James Abercombie, who for many years had so identified himself with the cause of his countrymen, that, long before popular election was introduced, he used to be described as the representative, not of the city, but of the citizens. No selection by the constituents could be more natural. Ever since the old bondage had begun to relax, he had warmly and steadily supported the people in all their reasonable efforts; and they who know those matters best will be the readiest to attest that, without his sagacity and

firmness, his influence and parliamentary experience, and his earnest desire to improve the condition of his countrymen, many of their strongest claims would have been without a practical adviser in London.

He and Jeffrey received a requisition to let themselves be put in nomination, signed by about 1200 electors. They consented, and went through the usual processes of addressing meetings of the constituents, and of seeing and conferring with the district leaders. These things have become common since; but this was the first time that the people had ever exercised the elective franchise; and the novelty of the proceedings gave them an interest that can never be felt again. People stared at the very sight of the hustings; all from curiosity, many with delight, some with unaffected horror. One party saw, in these few rough planks, the fulfilment of a vision long cherished; another the end of a system which they had hoped to perpetuate. The nomination was on the 17th of December 1832, the declaration of the poll upon the 19th. Their opponent on the Tory side was a most excellent gentleman, Mr. Forbes Blair, a banker. The result was, that 4058 voted for Jeffrey, 3865 for Mr. Abercrombie, 1519 for Mr. Blair. It is due to the electors to state, that the two first were returned free of expense.

It was in connection with these proceedings that he first got well acquainted with the late Sir Thomas Lauder, who had left his most beautiful place on the river Findhorn, and settled in Edinburgh in 1831. His popular qualities made him a valuable

ally in an election, but it was for higher excellences that Jeffrey adhered to him. He was one of the most accomplished of country gentlemen. Few men, not bred to any regular profession (for his soldiership was very short) could have distinguished themselves in such a variety of ways as he could, if he had chosen. He did enough to attest his capacity both for science and for art; and some of his works of fiction would have made more permanent impressions than they have done, had they not appeared in the immediate blaze of those of Scott. His account of the "Great Floods of August 1829, in the province of Moray and adjoining districts," is perhaps the best description that there is of any British inundation. Yet even these powers were apt to be lost sight of by his friends, amidst their enjoyment of his worth and amiable gaiety.

Jeffrey remained here from August 1832 till February 1833, when he was obliged to return to Parliament; and at no period of his life was he happier, or with better reason. Restored health, the society of his natural friends, some truce to official annoyance, a slight resumption of his professional occupations, and the high position he had reached, supplied him with all the sources of rational pleasure.

On his way back to London, he says, "I left you all more sadly this time than the time before; partly, I believe, because I had settled more down to my old habits, and partly because I could not but feel how fast the tide of life is ebbing away from us, and

how little may remain to be enjoyed after another return, not *for* Edinburgh, but *to* it. No matter, we must all do as we must, and all is said. We are drifting down to rapids at least, if not to an absolute cataract, and we must keep our heads steady."—(To me, from Stevenage, 3d February 1833.)

The only friend, besides his wife, daughter, and servants, that he took with him, was one he often mentions, "*Poor Polly*," a grey and very wise parrot. He was attached to all that sort of domestic companions, and submitted to much banter on account of the soft travelling basket for the little dog Witch, and the large cage for this bird. The hearth-rug and the sofa were seldom free of his dumb pets. He was very unwell for above two months after he arrived, in the trachea, and generally, and nearly voiceless.

The reform of the burghs was now the great object, but it was far from superseding other matters; for there were endless discussions, and the usual amount of suggestive and of obstructive positiveness on all sides, about the Anatomy Bill, Church Patronage, Sheriffs, Law Reform, Edinburgh Annuity Tax, and many other matters. This was natural. The Reform Act had broken down the dam that used to keep back the stream of legislative improvement. The obstacle was no sooner removed, than grievances, all said, however old, to require instant correction, started up in every corner, and covered the land with exhalations of reformers. Some of these were reasonable; not the less so that they saw difficulties, and were patient. Many, in their enthusiasm and conceit, would hear of no doubt; and had to learn, by

mortifying experience, that most cases have at the least two sides, and that delay is often the ballast of sound legislation. In the first flush of their liberation, every one desirous of distinguishing himself by his little bit of reform, rushed with his project to the Lord Advocate; and if he found that Government or Parliament were not to concede in a moment all that he wanted, abused his Lordship as a changed man. Several of these schemes, clear as their promoters thought them, have not, after the lapse of twenty additional years, been settled yet. Meanwhile, though their promoters troubled the official receptacle, they could not subdue his sense of duty or his good nature. He heard everybody, and never spared himself, but could not help being often amazed at the absurdity he had to deal with.

In the midst of this bustle he did not forget the Speculative Society; which, and all other such institutions within the College, were in great danger from a scandalous desire on the part of the town-council or its leaders, to take all their apartments from them, for the accommodation of one or two professors. It was fortunate that at this very moment, Government was making a grant of about £10,000 to the magistrates for the college. The state of things being explained to Jeffrey, he went to Lord Brougham, and says (10th February 1833)—"I have seen the Chancellor, and he engages that the grant to the College certainly shall not issue, but on condition of the Studiosa Juventus having accommodation for their societies," which they accordingly were allowed to retain.

He was soon in all the whirl of the place he had gone to. "I dined yesterday at Ham with ———, and Lords ——— ——— ———, and other Tories. To-day I go to the Chief Justice's, whom I have scarcely seen; and to-morrow I have hard duty, first to the House of Lords at ten, then to the drawing-room at two, then to a *dressed* dinner at Lord Melbourne's at seven, and finally to Lady Lansdowne's at night. The drawing-room is the most irksome. But I do well to write to you to-day, though I cannot now write any more. Monday, 25th.—Well! I have got through the heaviest half of my day's task, having argufied till two, and paraded in the drawing-room till near five; a very brilliant and imposing spectacle, and more beautiful women than I ever saw together before, and more beautifully dressed. But the star of all stars in my eyes is ———, who wants nothing but wings and immortality to be an angel. The getting away, as usual, was tiresome; but, on the whole, I thought the pastime so good that I think I shall go to another. We had a delightful *quiet* dinner with the Chief Justice yesterday, no one but Sharpe and Empson. He is full of heart and spirits, and we stayed talking till eleven."—(To me, 24th February 1833.)

The Irish Coercion Bill gave him the best view he had yet obtained of the nature of a certain class of the Irish members—"without the least sense of shame or honour; bold, desperate, and loquacious." —(3d February 1833.) He was always inclined to hope better of O'Connell, and had a great admira-

tion of his eloquence. "He is a great artist. In my opinion indisputably the greatest orator in the House; nervous, passionate, without art or ornament; concise, intrepid, terrible; far more in the style of old Demosthenic directness and vehemence, than anything I have heard in this modern world; yet often coarse, and sometimes tiresome, as Demosthenes was too, though venturing far less, and going over far less ground."—(To me, 4th March 1833.)

The Burgh Bill was moved for on the 12th March 1833, "without any discussion, or next to none; and I shall read it a first time, I hope, to-morrow, and a second time on Friday, in the same quiet and comfortable way. The secret of this is, that we finally arranged to send it, after the second reading, to a special committee up stairs, consisting of all the twenty-three burgh members for Scotland, who may there discuss and suggest at their leisure, and, having so exhausted themselves, will not be much disposed, or readily allowed, to bother about it in the House."—(To me, 12th March 1833.)

Was it owing to their anticipating this, that they took their own way in the committee? He seems to have been absolutely worried; not so much by the direct opposition of those who were against the measure, as by the restless conceit and intolerance of its friends. Every man, in every town, thought that this was a matter on which he was entitled to speak, and confidently; and as there was little analogy to be affected by it in England, it was not adequately taken charge of by Government. It was

therefore far more distressing to the Lord Advocate, in whose unassisted hands they left it, than the parliamentary reform had been. "Our committee—I mean the Scotch burgh committee—goes on as ill as possible, and it is difficult to say who behaves worst." —"They chatter, and wrangle, and contradict, and grow angry, and read letters and extracts from blockheads of town-clerks and little fierce agitators; and forgetting that they are members of a great legislature, and (some of them) attached to a fair ministry, go on speculating, and suggesting, and debating, more loosely, crudely, and interminably, than a parcel of college youths in the first novitiate of disceptation." —(To me, 28th March 1833.)

His speculation upon Parliament itself, on its rising for Easter, is in the same spirit. "The first act of the new parliamentary drama will probably end, for a short interval, on Wednesday; and I am afraid is not to be looked back to with much satisfaction. The friction in the working of the machine, and the consequent obstruction of its movements, has been much greater than was ever known; and though this may grow less when it has been longer in use, as is the case with all new machines, I am afraid part of it is owing to the increased number of independent movements, and part, perhaps, to the want of the *old oiling* which can no longer be afforded. It is pretty plain, too, that though on the great *political* questions there is a great majority against all extreme opinions, there is a very formidable and unruly mass of crude and perilous doctrines upon all the other great interests of society; and,

above all, such a determination on the part of the respective *doctrinaires* to have what they call a full and thorough discussion of merits, and to take no check from indications of dislike and disgust on the part of the House, that I foresee we shall have quite as long and nauseating debates on currency, church reform, East Indies, slavery, property-tax, poor laws, and other economical topics, as we have had upon Ireland; and as life and days do not admit of equivalent prolongations, that we shall make no substantial progress in most of them, or in anything else, although we should sit till January; while the impatient and factious *movement* is hooting, and hissing, and abusing us for not regenerating all things before the middle of June! This is truly our position and practical prospect, which you will admit is sufficiently cheering. I often think seriously of cutting and running (especially if I have a sick fit), and the only thing that prevents me is the difficulty of deciding what to run to, and a sort of Epicurean fatalism in my creed, which has long made me believe that as we must *do something*, and suffer something, in this uncontrollable world, it is better to leave Providence to determine what it shall be, than to vex one's self, and increase one's responsibility, by trying to alter it."—(To me, 28th March 1833.)

There are few who have ever been engaged in getting even friends to co-operate in measures of practical wisdom, who will not sympathise with him when he says, "It is mortifying and marvellous to find *how difficult it is to do good*, even when one is good natured, and has neither sanguine motives nor sinister views."—(23d March 1833.)

The changes in the midst of which he lived, and the general action of new principles, exposed him somewhat more than usual, perhaps, to the torment of details, for which, as he could not control them, he should not have been held responsible, and which distract any Lord Advocate more than the higher duties of his place. "The great oppression to which my office is subjected is not so much in this business of legislature, as to which the Advocate should always be for something, as the endless *political references* and reports upon applications for places and offices, from a common exciseman up to a supreme judge, through all the variations of ministers, schoolmasters, professors, justices of the peace, lords-lieutenants, staff surgeons, colonels, consuls, King's confectioners, etc. etc. The time this occupies, and its infinite irksomeness, is the great drawback to the situation; and it must sooner or later be relieved of it."—(To me, 16th April 1833.)

These vexations were not diminished by feeble health, made worse by the hay fever. "The weather is very hot and beautiful now. I wish I were lolling on one of my high shady seats at Craigcrook, listening to the soothing wind among the branches. And it is shocking to think how much all that scene is disenchanted by its vicinity to my constituents. The fleshly presence of ——— ——— ———,* by whom I am baited daily, helps, I doubt not, to enliven that impression."—(To me, 16th July 1833.) He refreshed himself by substitute scenes. "I do take

* All dead, and most intolerable wherever any opinion of theirs was not instantly submitted to.

your advice and fly at the end of the week to my wood nymphs. We came here last night, eight hours before the Lords had read our bill for the second time, and I have been all day wandering among the ancient Druidical oaks and gigantic limes at Moor Park, which is about four miles off, and full of grandeur and beauty. What a country this old England is. In a circle of twenty miles from this spot (leaving out London and suburbs), there is more old timber and superb residences than in all Scotland, and with so little ostentation."—(To me, from Watford, 20th July 1833.)

"It is sweet weather, and I pine hourly for shades, and leisure, and the Doric sounds of my mother tongue! I read through the Gentle Shepherd the other day at Malthus's, and cried plentifully over the recollections it brought back to my excited heart. I think I am decidedly better, having sat in the House till after one this morning, and walked home pleasantly at the breaking up. But I shall keep to my hermit diet, and shall make a poor figure at your symposia, if I do not mend my manners before I come among you. Both Houses are dropping their members like trees their leaves in autumn. Town is visibly thinning, and begins to have a deserted appearance. It is a mercy the prorogation is still thought inevitable once a year."—(To me, 6th August 1833.)

The prorogation was now at hand. "The waters grow shallower, with rather more rapidity." I expressed my sorrow for this, as it would prevent my receiving more of his letters, which, in joke, I

threatened to publish, to which he says,—"You are very kind about my letters, but if I thought there was the least chance of their ever seeing the light, I fear all feelings of kindness would be cancelled. I sometimes laugh myself to think what a picture of contradictions and rash prophecy they must exhibit. The only thing I have not to blush for is, that I do not think they indicate any base regard to self-interest, or any personal malice or vindictiveness. I think we must make a bonfire of them the first time we dine quietly together at a winter fire-side, if that is ever to be again."—(To me, 12th August 1833).

"Cobbett, and ——, and our worthy ——, grow more radical and outrageous as the session draws to a close; in order, I suppose, that they may go to their constituents with the sweet savour of these offences fresh upon them, to counteract any odour of reason or moderation that they may have contracted in other parts of their course." "In other respects we move rather steadily to our destined goal; and it seems universally thought that the curtain will be dropped, and the audience dismissed, about the 27th. Unless I have bad luck, therefore, I do not see why I should not get away on the 24th or 25th. I pant beyond expression for two days of absolute and unbroken leisure. If it were not for my love of beautiful nature and poetry, my heart would have died within me long ago. I never felt before what immeasurable benefactors these same poets are to their kind, and how large a measure, both of actual happiness and prevention of

misery, they have imparted to the race. I would willingly give up half my fortune, and some little of the fragments of health and bodily enjoyment that remain to me, rather than that Shakspeare should not have lived before me. And so God bless you." —(To me, 16th August 1833.)

The Burgh Bill, in spite of all its perils (some of them not from its open enemies), was at last safe; and looking back upon it and the reform of Parliament, he was well entitled to enjoy these reflections:—"If things go right, I think I shall move on Sunday or Monday. It makes me start when I think of this as a reality, which I have been so long accustomed to cherish as a dream by night and a vision only in the day. It is something to have had even an official and accidental connection with two such measures as Parliamentary and Burgh Reform; and if I have not made, or had occasion to make, any great splash about them, I must say I think I have been diligent and prudent in my management, as I am sure I have been candid and open in every stage of their discussion. I shall never have any task of equal importance to perform, and should be well enough pleased if this should be the last that is required of me. Though I like London, and do not dislike Parliament by any means, I rather think I have had almost enough of them; and that it would be better for me to retreat to a calmer and less elevated region, and glide through the remaining course of my life in tranquillity. I shall not run at once into the embraces of my constituents."—(To me, 20th August 1833.)

He left London on the 24th of August, and after some English visits, reached Craigcrook about the middle of September. Within twenty-four hours the constituents found him out; but he "found them not only thoroughly amicable, but greatly more reasonable than I expected." The autumn and winter were passed as usual; and early in February he returned to London, "with something of a heavy heart and a shrinking spirit, and would rather have flown away on a dove's wings, and been at rest. But I suppose this will come some time; and meanwhile I will take it for granted that, when I am once in the battle, I shall imbibe the spirit of the scene, and follow the multitude to do evil."—(To Mrs. Pennington, 9th February 1834.) He certainly did. These pensive aspirations after rest, though they occurred in his visionary moments, seldom obstructed his practical pursuits. During the three months of this residence in London, he was often in the House of Lords professionally, and a great deal in society, but was chiefly occupied in the House and its committees, on various local matters, which need not be explained here, and had no result. Of these the most important related to the old, and vexed, and now useless, subject of patronage in the Church of Scotland, on which a committee had been obtained by his friend Sir George Sinclair. While these things were going on, a vacancy occurred on the bench of the Court of Session, and he became a judge.

"I am no longer in Parliament after two hours, and no longer Lord Advocate. A new writ will be

moved for Edinburgh to-night, on my acceptance of office. I have just taken my last peep into that turbulent, potent, heart-stirring, House of Commons, and finished an hour ago the last argument I shall ever deliver from any bar. There is something sad in these finalities, and my present feeling is of that character; but through this dimness I see a bright vision of leisure, reason, and happiness. God bless you, ever yours. Remember I am, hereafter, only F. J., and no franks."—(To me, 15th May 1833.)

"I am so much flattered and condoled with here that I linger too fondly. But all that scene will soon pass away now, and I *shall* by and by forget it, as much as I ought to forget it."—(To me, 23d May 1834.)

"And so here at last ends our metropolitan correspondence! and I really turn my back *finally* on London, and betake myself to the venerable functions of a judge. I wish I had more of the inward vocation to the holy office. But I suppose it will come, and I am quite sure I shall be delighted to find myself once more in the midst of my oldest and truest friends. In the meantime I cannot but wish that the parting were fairly over, nor help acknowledging that it has been, and is, attended with pain. I have naturalised here perfectly, and have been more kindly received than is good for my modesty to remember, though I am sure it is not bad for my heart. I have stuck to my social career too, as dutifully as I did to my parliamentary. On Saturday I dined with Rogers; on Sunday at Richmond; yesterday at Lady Park's; and to-day at Holland

House, with Lady Cowper, Duncannon, Luttrel, and Sir A. Paget. Then I saw my bright ——— in the morning, and my dear ——— at night, and had such tender partings! And I had a long walk in the park yesterday with the Chancellor and Duncannon, both as merry as school-boys; and sat an hour with Joanna Baillie, and my poor, sick, spirited Mrs. Calcot. Well, there must be an end of all things, and the end of one thing is the beginning of another, and death of life, and so forth."—(To me, 27th May 1834.)

To George Bell, the old and steady associate of his obscure and penniless days, he intimated his change of life thus:—"You know I am out of Parliament, and about to be on the bench. I have had a pang on parting with so much interest, excitement, and kindness, as have been shed over my life here. But I do not doubt that I have done right on the whole, for myself at all events, and I hope not wrong for any other. I am not composed enough to write deliberately, but the greatest soother I can find, in my agitation, is the thought of coming back to end my days where they began, and among the few remaining friends from whom I have never been for a moment divided in affection."—(To George Bell, Esq., London, 16th May 1834.)

Before he came away he had the honour of receiving a farewell banquet from the Scotch members. About thirty-three attended, some of whom were his political opponents. One of the party, who, I believe, had a longer experience of parliamentary speaking than any one there, wrote to a friend

here next day, "Jeffrey's speech at his dinner yesterday was exquisitely beautiful. It was perfect. I cannot say how much I was pleased and charmed with it." His own account of the party was this:—"I had a jolly dinner with the Scotch members on Tuesday—about thirty-two present—two Tories, Cumming Bruce and Pitfour. Apologies in very kind terms from Sir William Rae, and about a dozen of our friends. They stayed till one o'clock, and were not all sober."—(To me, 22d May 1834.)

This testimony proceeded partly from personal liking; but it was also meant as an acknowledgment of his official conduct. And certainly the duties of the very trying situation he had just left have never been performed, in such circumstances, with greater industry, or fairness, or judgment; nor was Scotland ever under the protection of a purer or more enlightened public accuser. Some people used to doubt if he was a good manager of men. But these were generally persons who were urging him to do something he disapproved of. And, at any rate, some deficiency in the art of controlling discordant parties would be but a small deduction from the merit of any counsel raised suddenly into his position, even in peaceful times. But he was called into public action at a period teeming with projects, and he, nearly deserted by Government, was left to the mercies of every county, city, parish, public body, or person, who had an interest or a fancy to urge. Thus encouraged, few opponents were candid; some friends obstinate; no theorist timid; no applicant slack; no blockhead modest.

Having done all that patience, reason, and kindness could do to bring this chaos into order, the failure, when it occurred, was their fault—not his. Let him be tried by any one who has held his office. Had it not been for the steady aid of a few honest and sensible men, neither he, nor any one else, could have stood in the place he then occupied. Of these friends, to him and to Scotland, he always mentioned the Earl of Minto and Mr. Kennedy, as entitled to his gratitude, and to that of their country. Throughout the whole composition of the Reform Bill, down to the minutest criticisms, he had to receive the remarks of a committee of sheriffs, whose duty it was, they being the officers who were principally to carry it into effect, to anticipate and to fancy objections. But though there perhaps was not one of them who would not have rejoiced in the failure of the measure, their suggestions were made in a fair spirit, and were therefore always gratefully listened to, and to a great extent acted upon. Mr. Cay, the intelligent Sheriff of Linlithgowshire, who was their convener, informs me that throughout all their many, and often rather teasing, objections and proposals, pervading at least nine editions of the bill, they found the Lord Advocate not merely open to explanation, but patient and reasonable. No fact could be more honourable to the candour of both parties.

It was also said that he had *failed* in Parliament; and wondor was expressed how this could befall a person of his ability and character. But, unless it was as a speaker, he did not fail. He was a regular

attender, a good voter, a wise adviser, and a popular gentleman. Few men's opinions were more valued. Can there not be a good silent member? If all those are to be held to have failed who do not speak well and often, there are at least five hundred members who have failed in every Parliament. As to speaking, though he practised it much more, and much better, than is commonly supposed, still, *for him*, he must be deemed not to have succeeded. But there is no difficulty in accounting for this. The true wonder would have arisen if it had been otherwise.

He was a lawyer; who had entered the House at fifty-seven; with a great reputation, a weakened voice, and the certainty that his parliamentary career could not extend beyond a very few years, and might end at any moment. Nothing beyond these facts could have been required to have explained his want of success, though it had been complete and irrecoverable. But, in addition to these obstacles, he was a member of the Government; and his public words, therefore, were not his own. There are some to whom this restraint is a comfort. It justifies their silence, and directs them what to say. But to Jeffrey's speculative head, and nimble tongue, it operated as water does upon fire.

As a Speaker.

Yet, beyond all question, he was an eloquent man. And, though his power was not displayed in the great national theatre, it was upon his eloquence that much of his usefulness and reputation depended.

I have spoken of it partly already; and as it is scarcely worth while describing anything so evanescent and so common as good speaking in this country, on its own account, I only add a few words in order to identify the individual style.

His voice was distinct and silvery; so clear and precise, that, when in good order, it was heard above a world of discordant sounds. The utterance was excessively rapid;* but without sputtering, slurring, or confusion; and regulated into deliberate emphasis, whenever this was proper. The velocity of the current was not more remarkable than its purity and richness. His command of language was unlimited. He used to say that if he had to subdue the world by words, he would take his arms from Jeremy Taylor. And in copiousness and brilliancy, no living man came nearer the old divine. The mind by which these fine weapons were wielded, was fully qualified to use them. Ridicule, sarcasm, argument, statement, pathos, or moral elevation—he could excel in them all. The only defect was one which earlier parliamentary practice must have corrected, and which it is not easy to reconcile with the ethereal nature of his general style. It was that his magical facility led him into too much refinement, and consequently into occasional tediousness. He did not

* I believe the story is quite true, that a worthy man from Glasgow, on whom he poured out a long torrent of vituperation in an action for libel, after listening complacently till he was done, said, "Well! he has spoken the whole English language thrice over in two hours." He had been so much warned against this habit, in reference to Parliament, that sometimes he actually spoke too slowly there.

always rise to address an audience under the weight of deep preparation, or under the awe inspired by a large survey of his subject, but trusted to the immediate workings of his own mind. This withdrew him from the audience to himself; and, instead of maintaining that constant and instinctive sympathy with his hearers, which enables a plainer speaker to perceive his success or his failure at the moment in their eyes, he was apt to be looking inwards, and to be enjoying the inventive process going on in his own breast. This was an enjoyment with which listeners could have no sympathy. The pleasure was his, the weariness theirs. And the exercise promoted the defect of too active refinement. So just, with reference to all his peculiarities, was Horner's saying, that if Jeffrey could only speak slow, and add a cubit to his stature, and be a little dull, nobody could oppose him.

When he was in a good state, and with anything in the place, the occasion, or the subject, to repress his fertility, and to subdue him to a simpler style, his success was certain. His necessarily short addresses were almost always perfect. His appeal to the jury in the case of Paterson, accused of poisoning his wife, when, not being able to dispute that the prisoner had, at one time, intended to murder her, he successfully turned the fact into a ground for urging that during the interval he must have for ever recoiled from the guilt he had escaped; his defence for Mrs. Mackinnon, accused of stabbing a young man to death, in a brawl in her disorderly house, where he described the horrible nature of

public death to a female with some generous feelings, and how sweet life was even to a prostitute and a supposed murderess; his noble reply in the General Assembly for the minister of Inchture, in which his picture of the situation of a deposed clergyman, contrasted with that of his brethren, who, after pronouncing the sentence, were all to return to their comfortable homes, saved that client from conviction; his speech to the public meeting of the inhabitants of Edinburgh at the Pantheon; his graceful and affectionate address on his first installation as Lord Rector at Glasgow; his lofty and scornful reply to the jury for Sir James Craig, on the trial of that gentleman's prosecution of the printer of a party newspaper for libel,—these, and many others with which our Edinburgh ears still thrill, were matchless and unalloyed exhibitions—leaving impressions which no rival effort, by any competitor, could efface.

With a larger theatre than ours, and a more formidable training, his parliamentary success would have been sure and splendid. But he had no chance in the circumstances in which he first tried the House of Commons; partly because that, like every other assembly, has its own local tastes, and tolerates no other. Of these, the most extinguishing to an unpractised hand is the necessity of personalities—with which even instruction, to save it from being tiresome, must apparently be savoured. There is no denying the value of a weapon which is essential for the moral discipline of any assembly, and, as individually directed, may supply the most logical

conclusions. But it is one from which a new member of any delicacy shrinks, and which nothing but long familiarity with the proceedings and the individualities of the place can enable any one to use with confidence and effect.* Moreover, the frequent failures in Parliament of speakers who shine elsewhere, are not always owing, as the regular House of Commons man is apt to suppose, merely to the essential superiority of the great scene; but to Parliament requiring a very peculiar criterion of excellence, and having power to enforce submission to this, to the exclusion of every other, style. There is every presumption that the best tone will be formed, and the best standard be set up, and the fairest play be given, in such a collection of such men; but there is no doubt that the distaste of everything that is strange to their own habits and models does occasionally, and especially when dealing with the audacity of a provincial reputation, impair their perception of merit, which, wherever the field was open, would not be universally postponed to that of their own idols.

Jeffrey's reception in all his previous visits to London, where he had formed many valuable friendships, had always been kind. But during the three official years which he had mostly passed there, he was still more extensively known and courted; and

* Horner accounts for his own silence, after being above two years in Parliament, partly by this necessity. "There have been some discouragements of a different nature; the petty war of political personalities is exceedingly irksome to me (being personally not implicated), and I have witnessed but little else since I sat in the House."—Memoirs, i. 445.

this by various classes, including not only the literary and political, but, to a certain extent, even the fashionable. This popularity, by which he was less elated, than softened into gratitude, was the result of his character and of his conversation.

His Conversational Powers.

The last I have not skill to describe, except negatively. He was certainly a first-rate talker. But he was not an avowed sayer of good things; nor did he deal, but very sparingly, in anecdote, or in personalities, or in repartee; and he very seldom told a story, or quoted, and never lectured; and though perpetually discussing, almost never disputed; and though joyous, was no great laugher. What then did he do? He did this:—His mind was constantly full of excellent matter; his spirit was always lively; and his heart was never wrong; and the effusion of these produced the charm. He had no exclusive topics. All subjects were welcome; and all found him ready, if not in knowledge, at least in fancy. But literary and moral speculations were, perhaps, his favourite pastures. And in these, as in any region whatever, for nothing came amiss, he ranged freely, under the play of a gay and reasoning imagination; from no desire of applause, but because it gratified his mental activity. Speaking seemed necessary for his existence. The intellectual fountains were so full that they were always bubbling over, and it would have been painful to restrain them. For a great talker, he was very little of an usurper. Everybody else had full

scope, and indeed was encouraged; and he himself, though profuse, was never long at a time; except perhaps when giving an account of something of which he was the mere narrator, when his length depended on the thing to be told. Amidst all his fluency of thought, and all his variety of matter, a great part of the delight of his conversation arose from its moral qualities. Though never assuming the office of a teacher, his goodness of feeling was constantly transpiring. No one could take a walk, or pass a day or an evening with him, without having all his rational and generous tastes confirmed, and a steadier conviction than before of the dependence of happiness on kindness and duty. Let him be as bold, and as free, and as incautious, and hilarious, as he might, no sentiment could escape him that tended to excuse inhumanity or meanness, or that failed to cherish high principles and generous affections. Then the language in which this talent and worth were disclosed! The very words were a delight. Copious and sparkling, they often imparted nearly as much pleasure as the merry or the tender wisdom they conveyed. Those who left him might easily retire without having any particular saying to report, but never without an admiration of mental richness and striking expression. His respect for conversational power made him like the presence of those who possessed it. But this was not at all necessary for his own excitement, for he never uttered a word for display, and was never in better flow than in the ordinary society of those he was attached to, however humble their powers, and al-

though they could give him no aid but by affection and listening. There was so much in his own head and heart, that, in so far as he was concerned, pouring it out was enjoyment enough. It may appear an odd thing to say, but it is true, that the listener's pleasure was enhanced by the personal littleness of the speaker. A large man could scarcely have thrown off Jeffrey's conversational flowers without exposing himself to ridicule. But the liveliness of the deep thoughts, and the flow of the bright expressions, that animated his talk, seemed so natural and appropriate to the figure that uttered them, that they were heard with something of the delight with which the slenderness of the trembling throat, and the quivering of the wings, make us enjoy the strength and clearness of the notes of a little bird.

But it is idle in any one to speak on this subject after what has been said by one of the greatest masters, and best critics of conversation. Sir James Mackintosh says (Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 251), "We saw, for the first time, Playfair and Jeffrey; the first, a person very remarkable for understanding, calmness, and simplicity; the second more lively, fertile, and brilliant, than any Scotchman of letters; with more imagery and illustration added to the knowledge and argumentative powers of his country; and more sure than any native of this island whom I have seen, to have had splendid success in the literary societies of Paris." If this was true in 1812, when Sir James wrote it, it was much truer in 1834, when Jeffrey left London, and when he had had more experience of life, and had seen a greater

variety of people, and had been more ripened by time.

Raised to the Bench.

He took his seat on the bench on the 7th of June 1834. The Scotch judges are styled *Lords;* a title to which long usage has associated feelings of reverence in the minds of the people, who could not now be soon made to respect or understand *Mr. Justice.* During its strongly feudalised condition, the landholders of Scotland, who were almost the sole judges, were really known only by the names of their estates. It was an insult, and in some parts of the country it is so still, to call a laird by his personal instead of his territorial title. While this custom was universal, a man who was raised to the bench naturally took his estate's name with him, because it was the only name that he was known by. Even lairds came, however, in time to be identified by their christian and surnames. Yet, for a while, the fashion of sinking the individual appellation, and carrying the landed one to the judgment-seat, lingered; not always from vanity, but because it was natural for landholders to dignify themselves by their estates, and their estates by their judicial office. But this assumption of two names, one official and one personal, and being addressed by the one and subscribing by the other, is wearing out, and will soon disappear entirely. Jeffrey had land enough to entitle him to sink his honoured name in that of his bit of earth; but, like many others, he did not choose to do it, and became Lord Jeffrey.

He had to be in Court at nine, which alarmed him more than anything else in his new situation. He tells Mrs. Pennington, Malshanger,* one of his most cherished friends (26th of December 1834), "I have certainly had rather hard work, but I do not find it irksome. Even the early rising, which I dreaded the most, proves very bearable. Certainly in the whole of my past life, I never saw so many sun-rises as since the beginning of November, and they have been inexpressibly beautiful."

From the very first moment of his judicial appointment he cast all politics aside; not his interest in them, for this would have been to have relinquished his reason, but his practical interference with them as a party man. If the election of his best friend, and of the best member of parliament, had depended on his vote, that candidate would have lost the return. The most magnificent public dinner ever given in Edinburgh was that to the late Earl Grey, on the 15th of September 1834, immediately after the first meeting here of the British Association. He sighed at not being there, fresh as he was from all his personal and official connection with the object of the festival. But he would not attend; and his only allusion to it in writing to Mrs. Craig, about the recent scenes, is so faint as scarcely to be visible. "You know we have had a stirring time of it for the last months in these latitudes; first with our *Savans*, and then with our politicians; and that our quiet home has been agitated by the residence of chancellors and other

* Afterwards Mrs. James Craig.

dignitaries, and our provincial dulness enlivened by the resort of vagrant metropolitans without number. But the tumult is now over. The comets have all swept beyond our orbit, and left us to the steadier influences of our old moon and stars; and here we are in our contented obscurity, and well enough pleased with our leisure and stupidity. It is the loveliest weather; so calm, and bright, and warm, that, but for the shortening days, it might still be mistaken for midsummer. And the early twilights only give a more solemn character to its sweetness, and make me think more deeply and tenderly of the summers that are gone, and the eternal summer that is coming, never to pass away. Well, there is comfort in these thoughts, and *you* will not think them fantastical."—(5th October 1834.)

The general course of his life, after becoming a judge, exclusive of that part of it which was passed in Court, was, that he was in London or its neighbourhood almost every spring, at Craigcrook all autumn, and in Edinburgh all winter; and that the hospitalities of his town and his country residences went on nearly as they used to do. During the sitting of the Court, the performance of his official duties exhausted nearly his whole day, the evenings especially; and his spare time, whether during his sittings or in vacation, was given to society, to correspondence, to walking, to lounging in his garden, and to the gratification of his appetite for reading. For the indulgence of this last passion, he was very little indebted to anything that could be called a

FRANCIS JEFFREY

May – 1837.

Reduced from Drawing by B. W. Crombie.

Edinburgh: A. & C. Black.

library of his own. For a lover of books, and for one who had picked up a few, his collection was most wretched; and so ill cared for that the want even of volumes never disturbed him. The science of binding he knew nothing about, and therefore despised, and most of his books were unbound. These slatternly habits all arose from his believing that books were only meant to be read; and that, therefore, so as their words were visible nothing else was required. It must have been in a moment of infirmity that such a heretic allowed himself (30th January 1826) to be made a member of the Bannatyne Club, the only book association of the kind with which he was ever connected.

In 1835 he completed the beauty and comfort of Craigcrook by making his last and greatest addition to the house. In doing so he took, and followed, the advice of his friend William Playfair, Esq.—an architect of whom Edinburgh is justly proud, and who will leave many monuments of his taste in the edifices that adorn it. This operation forced him to quit the place for this summer; and he found a retreat at Skelmorlie, an old castle on the southern shore of the Clyde (the most beautiful of all British firths), with the sea at its feet, and glorious prospects of Arran and Argyleshire on the opposite side. "I have enjoyed my leisure exceedingly; perhaps, I should say, my *solitude*—and certainly the entire *sobriety*, which (out of solitude) is so difficult for some people to maintain. I have done nothing ever since I came; to my heart's content, and with a deep feeling of repose and tranquillity, which, except for

hours and half-hours, I have scarcely known for the last five years. I do not rise early; yet not late. Breakfast leisurely in a cool massive parlour, with deep-set windows on three sides, one looking through a loop-hole of the wood out on the silver sea; study the newspapers, as a man must do on a remote island; lounge about in the woods; read idle snatches of Shakspeare, and Fletcher, and Keats, and Shelley; sit watching seals, and porpoises, and yachts, and steam-vessels, and clouds playing with the peaks of Arran, and the little waves that are splashing round my feet, and the wild thyme, and the bees, and the white houses gleaming round the shores of the mountains, bays, and promontories before me; and the shells and pebbles that engaged the leisure of Scipio and Lælius, in a world in which nothing was like our world but the said shells and pebbles, and the minds of virtuous men resting from their labours. Well, will you not come and see? only I will not go to Arran, or any other foreign port, on or beyond seas, on any consideration." "I have bathed twice, yet I have still dyspepsy. Herrings are scarce, and salmon plenty, though rather of a poor description. The whitings are not so fine as they used to be. Milk and eggs excellent, and (for those who dare eat them) the most beautiful cherries in the world."—(To me, 25th July 1835.)

He wrote to me (22d August 1835) that "the only want I feel is of some vigorous intellect to grapple with. I do not know whether poor Sir Harry's idiocy of rustication is beginning with me;*

* Sir Harry Moncreiff used to say that no man long accus-

but I certainly feel that I read more passively than I used to do, and flatter myself that I am wisely taking in materials for after suggestion, when I am truly storing up food for oblivion only; but I am very resigned any way, and, after three score, perhaps nothing better is to be desired."

Since he only wanted a vigorous intellect to grapple with, I again exhorted him, but not very seriously, for I knew it was in vain, to grapple with his own, by trying some work of original composition. To this he says, "I have been delighting myself with Mackintosh. I only got the book two days ago, and have done nothing but read it ever since. The richness of his mind intoxicates me. And yet do not you think he would have been a happier man, and quite as useful and respectable, if he had not fancied it a duty to write a great book? And is not this question an answer to your exhortation to me to write a little one? I have no sense of duty that way, and feel that the only sure or even probable result of the attempt would be hours and days of anxiety, and unwholesome toil, and a closing scene of mortification."—(28th August 1835.)

It would have been no such thing. It would have given him occupation, usefulness, and fame. The obstinate weakness of this feeling recurs to us, now that it is all over, with increased pain. No man could more certainly have charmed posterity

tomed to the habits of an active city life of business, could retire and muse in the country for six months without becoming an idiot.

by some great original work. We have lost it by his periodical writing.*

However, while at Skelmorlie, he wrote the excellent article published in the Review in October (No. 125, art. 11), in which he records the grounds of his so loving and admiring Sir James.

Lord Rutherfurd.

He was gratified next year by an event which gave him the greatest satisfaction. He had become acquainted with Mr. Andrew Rutherfurd, soon after the latter had entered the Faculty of Advocates in 1812, and had very early marked and cherished him as a young man of great promise. Their acquaintance soon grew into friendship; and was followed by habits of the most intimate confidence. It was with the greatest delight therefore that, in the spring of 1837, he witnessed his friend's first advance into public life by his promotion to the office of Solicitor-General. He knew that it opened the way to the higher station of Lord Advocate; for which he held Mr. Rutherfurd to be pre-eminently qualified. He was not disappointed. In about two years the Solicitor was raised to this situation; which he held, with some political interruptions, till 1851, when he became a judge. He was not allowed to accomplish

* "You must some day or other bring your thoughts on the philosophy of poetry and poetic expression into the form of a systematic essay; which I shall insist on your polishing with much care. That, and a little treatise on the ethics of common life, and the ways and means of ordinary happiness, are the works which I bespeak from you for aftertimes."—(Horner to Jeffrey, Memoirs, ii. 53.)

all that he intended; but he did enough to have his official history recorded in some of the wisest changes that have recently improved the legal and economical condition of this country. The statute (11 and 12 Victoria, chap. 36) which dissolves the iron fetters by which, for about 160 years, nearly three-fourths of the whole land in Scotland was made permanently unsaleable, and unattachable for debt, and every acre in the kingdom might be bound up, throughout all ages, in favour of any heirs, or any conditions, that the caprice of each unfettered owner might be pleased to proscribe, was his great work. Prejudice prevented him from correcting the absurdities of our marriage law, and from introducing a humane system of police for destitute lunacy; but it may be predicted with absolute certainty that these measures will be passed one day; and on that day he will be remembered. Meanwhile, he did enough to make his brethren of the bar take the rare step, on his recent elevation to the bench, of recording "the high satisfaction with which they have witnessed the promotion of another distinguished member of the bar—the late Lord Advocate; to whom the country and the profession are deeply indebted for important public services; and expressing their hope that Lord Rutherfurd may long be enabled to devote the eminent talents which have adorned his professional and official career, to the administration of those laws which his legislative measures have so materially contributed to mature and improve."—(Faculty Resolution, 23d May 1851.) Jeffrey did not live to bear a testimony, in the justice

of which he would have cordially rejoiced. There was no one, in point of time in the secondary formation of his friendships, to whom, in public proceedings and in private life, he was more thoroughly united; and the nearness of their two beautiful country places gave them peculiar opportunities of discussion and enjoyment.

On the 9th of March 1838 he joined a large party who dined together in honour of the late Sir William Allan, whose professional eminence had raised him to the second presidency of the Royal Scottish Academy. Sir William was the immediate object of the meeting; but it had an indirect and more important reference to that extraordinary rise in art, which, both in the native artists we have retained, and in those we have given England, has distinguished the modern progress of Scotland; and on account of which the Academy had been recently established. Jeffrey made a striking address; expressive of his belief, and its reasons, that, in spite of its northern sky, this country might attain as much eminence in art as it had already done in other intellectual pursuits. The thirteen years that have since passed have greatly tended to confirm the soundness of this opinion.

On the 27th of June 1838 his daughter was married to William Empson, Esq., Professor of Law at the East India College, Haileybury; a union from which, after the pang of parting with his only child was over, he derived the greatest delight. Besides deepening and extending his domestic affections, it multiplied his refreshing visits to England, and enlivened his autumns by the Empsons' returns

to Craigcrook; and it gave him these nice little grandchildren, some of them living with him almost always, in whom his heart was wrapt.

In 1840 he tried his hand, for the first time, upon a monumental inscription. It was for the foundation stone of Scott's monument. He was requested by the Committee to furnish it, but refused at first, believing himself incapable. At last, as he was walking out one day to Craigcrook, it occurred to him as an odd thing to write what was meant never to be seen, and this led him on, and before he had reached home, he had composed the following rather striking statement:—

"THIS GRAVEN PLATE,
DEPOSITED IN THE BASE OF A VOTIVE BUILDING
ON THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF AUGUST IN THE YEAR OF CHRIST 1840,
AND DESTINED NEVER TO SEE THE LIGHT AGAIN
TILL THE SURROUNDING STRUCTURES ARE CRUMBLED TO DUST
BY THE DECAY OF TIME, OR BY HUMAN OR ELEMENTAL VIOLENCE,
MAY THEN TESTIFY TO A DISTANT POSTERITY THAT
THE CITIZENS OF EDINBURGH BEGAN ON THAT DAY
TO RAISE AN EFFIGY AND AN ARCHITECTURAL MONUMENT
TO THE MEMORY OF SIR WALTER SCOTT;
WHOSE ADMIRABLE WRITINGS WERE THEN ALLOWED
TO HAVE GIVEN MORE DELIGHT, AND SUGGESTED BETTER FEELINGS
TO A LARGER CLASS OF READERS IN EVERY RANK OF SOCIETY
THAN THOSE OF ANY OTHER AUTHOR,
WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SHAKSPERE ALONE:
AND WHICH THEREFORE WERE THOUGHT LIKELY TO BE REMEMBERED
LONG AFTER THIS ACT OF GRATITUDE,
ON THE PART OF THE FIRST GENERATION OF HIS ADMIRERS,
SHOULD BE FORGOTTEN.

HE WAS BORN AT EDINBURGH 15TH AUGUST 1771;
AND DIED AT ABBOTSFORD 21ST SEPTEMBER 1832."

In the autumn of this year he wrote the article on Wilberforce's Correspondence, which was published in No. 145 of the Review.

On Saturday, the 5th of June 1841, instead of receiving the engaged Craigcrook party, he gave his friends a dreadful fright by fainting in Court. The attack was so severe and so sudden, that if his friend Mr. Thomas Maitland,* who happened to be pleading before him, had not made a spring and caught him, he must have fallen. He soon recovered from the direct attack, which, in itself, was found not to be material, though by no means insignificant as a symptom. In renewing the party for the Saturday following, he hopes that they will come, "to let me repair, in some degree, *the shabby trick* I played you last week."

But this trick, or its cause, affected him longer than he anticipated. He could not resume the performance of his duties in court, beyond a few feeble attempts, that session; and after lingering in Edinburgh, which was thought safer than Craigcrook, till August, he went to Haileybury. He was soon attacked there so severely by bronchitis, that his life was scarcely preserved. Foreseeing that he could not be in court when it met about the middle of November, he was inclined to resign instantly. Being exhorted to think well before taking such a step, as there might be opposite views even of its high-mindedness, he said, "I very much agree with you as to resignation. Nothing in this world shall

* Since Solicitor-General, and afterwards Lord Dundrennan, one of the judges.

induce me to retain office a single hour after I am *permanently* disabled from its duties. *That* I have always thought nothing less indeed than the meanest of *dishonesties*. But, on the other hand, when the strong probability is that the disability will prove *temporary* only, there would plainly be a similar dishonesty in snatching at idleness, and a retiring allowance, by representing it as permanent."—(To me, 30th October 1841.)

Application was made to the Home Office for leave of absence, and this was at once granted in very handsome terms.

He went to London about the 17th of November for advice, and remained there for some months. A formal explanation of his exact state, though not justifying any despair, was enough to have alarmed most men, but was cheerfully received by him. "I had my grand consultation of *three* doctors on Sunday, having called in Chambers in aid of the other two; and the result was very much, as I think I told you, the council of two had intimated before—viz., that though there was no organic, or special progressive disease, I must not expect *ever* to be much better than I now am, and should lay my account with always suffering in a degree from weak and disordered circulation, and being liable to occasional bronchial irritation. Few people, they said, get to my time of life without finding some of the vital functions impaired or disordered, and I had used up my vitality, and tasked my powers, they believed, a great deal more prodigally than the common run of their patients. Still, however, as all the

machinery seemed substantially sound, and energy enough left still to work it for ordinary purposes, they thought, by due care and caution, and sparing myself, both mind and body, for the future, they saw no cause why I should not merely live on in good comfort for many years to come, but even improve considerably on my present condition; and at all events to such an extent as to enable me to do all the work that ought ever to be required from a person of my standing. Now this, it must be owned, is not over and above encouraging, and amounts, I think, to a pretty distinct intimation that my *May* of life (though there is some impudence I own in my usurping the name of that month) is fallen into the sere and yellow leaf, and that I must hereafter live a regulated, careful, valetudinarian, sort of life. No more dining out, or giving dinners, or appearing at the best like a death's head at these festivals, and puling upon two slices of meat and two glasses of sherry! No going out at night, or sitting up late to write or read; wearing trot-cosies and comforters; taking no long fast walks, and shrinking from autumn showers and spring breezes. I do not pretend to like such an Avenir; but as I suppose I cannot help myself, I try to make the best of it, and if I can only make sure of that 'which should accompany old age,' and escape the danger of 'curses' or 'mouth honour,' I dare say I shall get on very well; only I am afraid I shall be impatient till I see some of my brothers lose their tails also." —(To me, 22d February 1842.)

He gave a similar account of his being fixed,

"with regimen and restraints," "or a lower level of vitality," to Mr. Rutherfurd, and adds, "I hope I shall submit to them cheerfully, and even acquire a taste for the hermit and self-denying life which I am now entering. But just at present, I must honestly confess, I would have preferred sticking a little longer to my pleasant vices; and cannot help feeling, too, like the voluptuaries in Juvenal, upon whom, while they are still calling for wine, women, and garlands, 'obrepit *non intellecta* Senectus.'"

His letters and his conversations throughout this long illness, and throughout all his bodily weaknesses, were always so full of the details and the severities of his afflictions, that a stranger might conclude either that his health was generally hopeless, or that he was a poor-spirited patient. But the truth is just the reverse. Though seized by one or two dangerous attacks, and peculiarly subject to the encroaching infirmities of age, his life was on the whole healthy, and when necessary, there could scarcely be a more resolute sufferer. But a restless fancy, and an unfortunate sprinkling of medical knowledge, were apt to set him a speculating on the structure and working of his own system; and on this topic, so fertile and interesting to every invalid, he of course got easily eloquent, generally to the diversion of others. One of the difficulties that all his doctors had to encounter was, to hear, and then to refute, or to evade, the theories of the patient. But when anything had to be submitted to, passively or actively, he did it bravely. And the moment that the self-description or self-condolence was over, or

even while it was going on, he was ready for his friends. For example, when he went from Haileybury to London, on the 17th of November 1841, he writes that they were obliged to have in the carriage "such wrappings, and hot water, and wax candles." But in a day or two he was receiving visitors—in a few more he was driving out—and long before the month was over, "I continue to drive out every day, and think I am less exhausted by it than at first. I have seen several people for very short visits—Sydney Smith, Macaulay, Lady Theresa Lister, Miss Berry, Rogers, Hallam, Brougham, Lord Campbell, Carlyle, and a few more—all of whom behaved very well in going away soon, and allowing me to speak but little, except ——, who sat an hour, and made me talk so much, I coughed all the evening after. I am to see Dickens to-morrow, who is just returned from the country in perfect health, and luxuriating in the honeymoon of his year of idleness."—(To me, 30th November 1842.)

He left London about the middle of March (1842), and went for about two months to Clifton, and then to Haileybury, previous to his return to Edinburgh. At Haileybury he received intelligence of the sudden death of Sir Charles Bell, which took place in England on the 29th of April. "This is a sad blow, the loss of good, kind-hearted, happy Charlie Bell. It met me here on my arrival. I do not know whether poor George or his wife is most to be pitied, but the loss will be terrible and *irreparable* to both. Except George himself, I have not so old and intimate a friend left, and it may be a

kind of comfort to think that I cannot have many more such losses to bear. We were familiar from boyhood, and though much separated from residence and occupation, never had a notion of alienation, or a cessation of that cordiality and reliance on each other's affection, which is also a comfort even now." (To me, 8th May 1842.)*

He resumed his place in court (in May 1842) in a very good state, and continued in Scotland all the rest of this year, mostly at home, and in full judicial vigour.

In December he had to endure another severe affliction. Mr. Robert Morehead died on the 13th of that month. His feelings on this visitation were thus expressed in a letter to the widow:—"My dear Margaret—I need not say that Phemie's communication gave us a sharp pang, and the event must have been longer and more clearly foreseen by you, I imagine, than even by us. But when the blow does at last fall, these anticipations do not save us from a shock; and in the case of those whose strength has been impaired by watching, while their thoughts have been partly distracted by

* Jeffrey afterwards wrote the following Epitaph, which is now on a tablet in the parish church of Hallow, near Worcester, where Sir Charles was buried:—"Sacred to the memory of Sir Charles Bell, who, after unfolding with unrivalled sagacity, patience, and success, the wonderful structure of our mortal bodies, esteemed lightly of his greatest discoveries, except only as they tended to impress himself and others with a deeper sense of the infinite wisdom and ineffable goodness of the Almighty Creator. He was born at Edinburgh in 1774, and died in England 29th of April 1842."

constant occupation, I fear it is often felt more severely than they themselves are prepared for. I shall therefore be anxious to learn that you and dear Lockey and Phemie have not suffered, and that you are bearing this great affliction with courage and resignation. It must always be a great consolation to you to know that you not only soothed and cheered his closing days by your kind and devoted attention, but that to your constant and judicious care of him for many preceding years he was indebted, not only for the chief enjoyments of these years, but most probably for their being added to his existence. For myself, though unavoidably much separated from him of late years, I can truly say that my love and regard for him has never suffered a moment's abatement; and that though it is sad enough, God knows, to have to lament the loss of nearly the last of my friends of early life, it is still very gratifying to look back upon an intimacy of more than half a century with the feeling that there never was an hour of misunderstanding between us, nor a chill in the warmth, or a passing cloud on the brightness, of our mutual affection. When you can recur to it without too much pain, I think I should like to have a more particular account of his last days, and to know how his patience and trust in the Great Being to whom he was returning, sustained him through the final struggle. I shall likewise be glad, by and by, to have a copy of the work which occupied so many of his parting hours; and, above all, to learn what changes, if any, in your plans of life and domestic arrangements this removal of the

head of the house is likely to occasion. Poor little Mary was very greatly moved, I understand, when the melancholy news was broken to her. Charlotte and I have had long talks of you ever since, as well as good Martha Brown, who has this morning returned to Lanfine."—(16th December 1842.)

On the 22d of November of this year (1842), a material change took place in his judicial position. According to usage, he had hitherto been acting in a court by himself, where decisions are seldom given openly and verbally, but in the form of written judgments, with notes explanatory of their reasons, all prepared after debate and consideration of written papers at home, and every adjudication liable to the review of another branch of the court. Except for its comparative obscurity, this situation was not in all respects unfavourable for Lord Jeffrey. It tended to repress his discursiveness, and enabled him to enrich the reports with many admirable opinions written deliberately by himself. But he was now removed into the first of the two divisions into which the Court of Session is separated, where he had three brother judges, and more publicity; where all causes were argued, and all judgments delivered, in open court; and there was no review except in the House of Lords. This was a more difficult and responsible position. He would have succeeded with any of his brethren, and they with him; but he was certainly happily placed beside the three with whom it was his lot to act. They were all men of talent and learning, fond of their work, and very friendly towards each other; men by

whom even Jeffrey's intellect was sharpened, and before whom he could never be too ingenious without detection. Nothing higher can be said of any tribunal than that, in addition to the various powers of Lord Jeffrey, it contained the long experience and great practical sagacity of the Lord President Boyle; the acute and intelligent logic of Lord Fullerton,—combining, with rare felicity, the often separated qualities of great fineness with great soundness of understanding; and the curious talent of Lord Mackenzie—amiable amidst the fiercest contention, and solving in playfulness the abstrusest difficulties; whose gentleness of disposition and awkward feebleness of manner contrasted amusingly with the riches of a very working mind; which, whether exercised in courts or in society, was always intrepid and original. That was as good a court as Scotland ever saw; and these four men would have elevated any judicial tribunal, in any country to the law of which they might have been trained. Jeffrey was much attached to them all. Fullerton, indeed, and Mackenzie, were his old personal friends.

Notwithstanding one questionable habit, the judicial duties have rarely been better performed than they were by him. His ability need not be mentioned—nor the sensitiveness of his candour, nor his general aptitude for the law. Surpassed, perhaps, by one or two in some of the more mystical depths of the law of real property, his general legal learning was more than sufficient to enable him, after ordinary argument, to form sound views, and to de-

fend them, even on these subjects. The industry that had turned the vivacity of his youth to account, and had marked all his progress, followed him to the bench. His opinions were always given fully, and with great liveliness, and great felicity of illustration. His patience, for so quick a person, was nearly incredible. He literally never tired of argument, and therefore had rather a leaning against all devices for shortening proceedings not on matters of mere form. This was partly the result of a benevolent anxiety to make parties certain that they had at least been fully heard; but it also proceeded from his own pleasure in the game. Though not exactly denying the necessity of rules for ending discussion, he scarcely liked them; and half pitied a party whose desire to say still more on his own matter, which was everything to him, was resisted for the convenience of other matters, for which he cared nothing; and has been known to say, that if there was only one cause in the world it would never end; and why should it? What are other causes to a man who has not done with his own? He who was inclined to hold this paradox must have been a very patient judge. It was his patient activity that reconciled him to it, even as a paradox.

The questionable thing in his judicial manner consisted in an adherence to the same tendency that had sometimes impaired his force at the bar—speaking too often and too long. He had no idea of sitting, like an oracle, silent, and looking wise; and then, having got it all in, announcing the result in as many calm words as were necessary, and in no

more. Delighted with the play, instead of waiting passively till the truth should emerge, he put himself, from the very first, into the position of an inquirer, whose duty it was to extract it by active processes. His error lay in not perceiving that it would be much better extracted for him by counsel, than it generally can be by a judge. But, disbelieving this, or disregarding it, his way was to carry on a running margin of questions, and suppositions, and comments, through the whole length of the argument. There are few judges in whom this habit would be tolerated. It is disagreeable to counsel, disturbs other members of the court, and exposes the individual to inaccurate explanation and to premature impression. But, as done by Jeffrey, it had every alleviation that such a practice admits of. It was done with great talent; with perfect gentleness and urbanity; solely from an anxiety to reach justice; with no danger to the ultimate formation of his opinion; and with such kindly liveliness, that the very counsel who was stranded by it, liked the quarter from which the gale had blown. Accordingly, he was exceedingly popular with everybody, particularly with the bar; and the judicial character could not be more revered than it was in him by the public.

It was in the month of May 1843 that the Established Church of Scotland was rent in twain, by the secession of those who formed themselves into the Free Church. However anxious to avoid polemical matter, it would be wrong not to state what Lord Jeffrey's opinion was, since he had a very

decided one, on this the greatest event that has occurred in Scotland since the rebellion in 1745, if not since the Union.

The contest at first was merely about patronage. The owners, or patrons, of livings insisted that the practice of their presentees being inducted into parishes, if they were under no legal disqualification, however odious they might be to the parishioners, which practice had subsisted for a considerable period, should be continued; while the people maintained that this practice was a mere abuse, and one so offensive that it had for 100 years been the source of all the dissent by which the church had been weakened, and that popular unacceptability was of itself a ground on which the church courts were entitled to reject. Each of these views had its party in the General Assembly. But this point was soon lost sight of, absorbed in the far more vital question, whether the church had any spiritual jurisdiction independent of the control of the civil power. This became the question on which the longer coherence of the elements of the church depended. The judicial determination was, in effect, that no such jurisdiction existed. This was not the adjudication of any abstract political or ecclesiastical nicety. It was the declaration, and as those who protested against it held, the introduction, of a principle which affected the whole practical being and management of the Establishment. On this decision being pronounced, those who had claimed this jurisdiction, which they deemed an essential and indispensable part of what they had always un-

derstood to be their church, felt that they had no course except to leave a community to which, as it was now explained, they had never sworn allegiance. They accordingly seceded. And the result has been this.

Out of an Established clergy of about 1000 or 1100 ministers, 453 left the Establishment, followed in general by almost their whole congregations and elders. Their adherents in that true Church of Scotland (as they deem it) which then arose, have been increasing ever since, and now form 739 sanctioned congregations, besides 98 preaching stations; being 837 congregations in all. Deducting charges that are vacant, preaching stations, and congregations that have not yet called ministers, which three classes are supplied by authorised probationers, there are 623 ministers on the public Sustentation Fund. About 690 churches have been built, between 400 and 500 manses, about 400 school houses, and a college. For these and other purposes, the people have contributed about three millions of pounds sterling; of which £2,475,616 has been paid into the public account, and above £500,000 has been expended locally.

No public event had occurred in Lord Jeffrey's time, in which he took a deeper interest. He foresaw what was coming above a year before it happened, and then said, "I am grieved to the heart at the prospects of our church, but I think her doom is sealed; all which might have been prevented, had," etc. "And what a thing it is that the ——— should have brought upon Scotland the infinite

misery of her Established Church being that of a minority of her people, or at least of her religious people!"—(To me, 2d February 1842.) And within a few weeks of the event, referring to one of the unfortunate discussions by which it almost seemed as if the object had been to hide the approach of the catastrophe, instead of intelligently trying to avert it, he said—"Did you ever see a more tyrannical or short-sighted discussion than that on our poor church in the House of Lords? I am anxious to hear what her champions and martyrs are now doing, and what is understood to be their plan of operation at the Assembly. It will be a strange scene any way, and I suppose there will be a separation into two Assemblies," etc.—(To me, 4th April 1843.)

He declared his opinion from the bench to be hostile to what he held to be the novelty sanctioned by a majority of his brethren, and confirmed in the House of Lords; and, on the other aspects of the case, looking at them without ecclesiastical bigotry, ambition, or faction, of which he never had the very slightest touch, and solely with a secular eye, his feelings were entirely with the people.

His view was, that in theory, and while matters are all open, every pretence of exclusive ecclesiastical jurisdiction is to be received with distrust and alarm; but that the Church of Scotland, which had owed its existence to its defiance of the civil supremacy that had been claimed by the Steuarts, had been revived when the Steuarts were put down, as it had been originally founded, on the very prin-

ciple of its independence in spiritual matters; that in the modern conflict it was demanding nothing but what had immemorially been assumed in practice, and even in judicial practice, to be its right; that, instead of implying ecclesiastical tyranny, the system had worked so well that there never was a church better fitted for the people, or to which the people were more attached; that though, as usual in such collisions, there were faults and extravagances on all sides, the dispute might have been adjusted, if Government had interfered under a due intelligence of the danger; but that, deluded by the error that this was not a question with the people, but only with a few restless priests, and alarmed for English consequences, and smiling at the idea of clergymen renouncing livings, it virtually abdicated its authority, and never put itself into the state of mind necessary for averting a danger which it was assured did not exist; that the calamity might have been almost avoided by the mere concessions that were made to the people after it had occurred; that the church, as expounded, being a thing that they had never understood it to be, honest men who held this opinion could do nothing but leave it; that the heroism with which this was done made him "*proud of his country;*" and that the magnificent sacrifices by which, year after year, the secession had been followed, showed the strong sincerity, and the genuine Scotticism, of the principles on which the movement had depended.

He was painfully afflicted this autumn by the death of George Joseph Bell (2d September 1843);

one of his earliest friends; an honest and ill-used man.

Though steadily resisting all exhortations to write a new book, he was this year induced to publish parts of his old ones in a new form. His selected and arranged "*Contributions to the Edinburgh Review*" were published in November; with an amiable and candid preface, becoming his age and position. Many articles of greater power are left buried in the mass of the original work, but those he has chosen to avow derive a charm from their freedom from all factious feelings and interests, and from their recording that enduring literature and philosophy to which he delighted to recur in the calmness of advanced life, and which, in the midst of all his contentions, had been the prevailing enjoyments of his earlier years.

He sent me a copy of the book with the following letter:—"My dear C.—Though I *give* scarcely any of these books, I must send one to you, *ex debito justitiæ*, since it was truly by your, not encouragement or advice, but command and objurgation, that I was induced to set about the republication. On this account I once thought of dedicating it to you; but considering the nature of the work, I ultimately thought it better to inscribe it to one who had so much more connection with the Review. But you must not imagine that I do not hold you equally responsible for all the blame it may draw on me, as if your name had figured on the front of it; as you know very well that he who *hounds on* any one, under his authority, to the commission of

an improper act, is always regarded as the really guilty party. I hope you will think the preface long enough, and that as much is said in laud of the Review, as it was fitting for one of its founders to say. I trust too that you will not be scandalised at the *very moral* tone of my own individual professions. And so God bless you, my dear Cockburn.—Ever very affectionately yours.

25 Moray Place,
25th November 1843."

He was materially assisted in the preparation of these volumes by his friend Mr. Thomas Maitland, who helped him in many details with which he would otherwise have been perplexed. In sending him a copy of the work, he says—"You at all events are bound to judge of it with indulgence, since you cannot deny that you not only counselled the undertaking, but tempted me to engage in it by putting into my hands a sort of clue to the labyrinth, in which I do not know that I should otherwise have trusted myself. I must hope, too, that some little regard for the author, personally, will induce you to give him what countenance you can on this occasion."—(25th November 1843.) Mr. Maitland had been Solicitor-General before this, and was so again in 1846. In February 1850 he became Jeffrey's successor on the bench, with the title of Lord Dundrennan. But after too short a seat there, though long enough to enable him to give the highest promises of judicial excellence, he was unexpectedly, and to the deep sorrow of his

friends and of the public, withdrawn from us on the 10th of June 1851.

Though now above seventy, his intellect was as vigorous, and his heart as sunny, as ever. But he wisely began to think of himself as an old, or at least as a feeble, man. Most of his letters about this time, and afterwards, contain striking and pleasing accounts of his declining state. "My health," says he to Mrs. Fletcher, "after which you inquire so kindly, is weak enough certainly; but chiefly from a feeble circulation, and not attended with any worse suffering than a good deal of languor and weakness, unaccompanied, I am glad to say, either by any depression of spirits, or abatement of mental alacrity. I have got through our summer term without being a day out of court, and as alert in it, I believe, as any of my brethren. But I have been obliged to observe a strict regimen, and to take a great deal more care of myself every way than is at all suitable to my genius or habits. However, I continue to hobble along the broken arches with as good a grace as most of my fellow travellers, and wait with tranquillity for the close, which cannot be very distant."—(Craigcrook, 24th July 1844.)

This lady is the widow of his earliest patron, Mr. Archibald Fletcher; a person towards whom his regard, like that of all who have the happiness of knowing her, rose into affectionate veneration.

The grace with which he submitted to the inevitable doom was indeed very remarkable. His good affections were all retained and cherished; while the feelings connected with irritating passions and disquieting pursuits were as entirely quenched as

they ever can be in this life. When not employed judicially, which to him was always an agreeable occupation, old friends, young friends, especially the dear grandchildren, books, and external nature, were what he lived in; and all his prospects of the gradual, and now rapid, closing of life, were composed and reasonable. He mellowed so sweetly, that there was no period of his life when he attracted more respect and affection than during its last five years.

Time also changed his outward appearance. The bright manly eye remained, and the expressive energy of the lips, and the clear sweet voice, and the erect rapid gait. But the dark complexion had become pale, the black hair grey, the throat told too often of its weakness, the small person had become still smaller, and the whole figure evinced the necessity of great care.

Though preserving an undiminished relish of society, he could not indulge it as formerly; and, among other privations, was obliged to renounce dinners, either given or received. To compensate for this, he (Nov. 1844) made a sort of revival of the social cheerfulness of the old Edinburgh supper, without what would now be thought its convivial coarseness. His house was open to his friends, generally without invitations, every Tuesday and Friday evening, from about nine to twelve, during the four winter months. The party usually consisted of from about ten to about twenty, or even thirty ladies and gentlemen; who, instead of being left to freeze in ceremony, or to evaporate in words, sat at round tables, multiplied according to the demand, to a moderate, but not entirely a nominal, refection.

It is needless to say that such an arrangement, at that hour, produced excellent parties. He himself was always in great talk; especially with the two or three whom he detained after the rest were gone. These most agreeable meetings were kept up till the winter of 1848, when Mrs. Jeffrey's illness stopped them.

He asks in one of his letters,—"Has anybody thought of taking up my Tuesday and Friday evenings? Which upon looking back to them, seem to me like a faint, but not quite unsuccessful, revival of a style of society which was thought to have some attractions in the hands of Dugald Stewart and some others; though I fear we have now fallen in an age too late for such a revival, and that nothing but an amiable consideration for my infirmities could have given it the success it had."—(To me, Haileybury, 26th March 1845.)

His critical reputation made him be very frequently applied to for advice by persons disposed, but afraid, to publish; and Sir Walter himself was scarcely readier to assist them. I was asked, about this period, to get his opinion of a MS. poem by Mr. James Ballantine of Edinburgh. He gave it; with considerable praise, but with an advice, upon the whole, against publication, and decidedly against the adoption of verse as a profession. Referring to this admonition, he says, in another part of the preceding letter, "I hope you got (naming the poem) back in safety, and have softened my dehortative to the ingenious, and, I am persuaded, amiable author." Nobody could stand so kindly administered an admonition better than Mr. Ballantine, because his

other publications, both in verse and in prose, particularly his "*Gaberlunzie's Wallet*," a work which Burns would not have been anxious to have disowned, have given him a very high place among the writers of native Scotch. He is one of the sensible men who can combine business with literature; making the muses grace the business, and the business feed the muses.

He read a good deal; and present amusement being the only object, nothing rational came amiss. "In the meantime, you will be glad to hear that I am very tranquil, and, for the most part, very happy and comfortable. I sleep rather better than usual, have no actual pain, and very little oppression or discomfort, so urgent as to prevent me from interesting myself, quite as much as formerly, in reading and conversation. I read all the Pilgrim's Progress (for the first time for fifty years, I believe) yesterday and the day before; and I am now busy with the Life of Wycliffe, and the Memoirs of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon. So you see I am in a very godly course of study."—(To me, 4th September 1844.)

"And I have been reading Eldon's Life and Correspondence, in which there is much that is curious and instructive; and also Burke's, which is of a higher pitch to be sure, and to me full of the deepest interest and delight. The greatest and most accomplished intellect which England has produced for centuries, and of a noble and lovable nature." —(Haileybury, 4th September 1844.)

"I am generally able, however, to take several short walks every day, and read and converse, for

the most part, as pleasantly as ever. I have read a good deal, and, if with little improvement, at least with much satisfaction, almost all Arnold's writings, and especially his Introductory Lectures on History, which, though a hasty and rash production, and with great gaps, is full of good thoughts, and masterly views; many French historical and philosophical works of Thiers, Mignet, Barante, and others; most of Spenser's Fairy Queen, Vaughan's Life of Wycliffe, and many biographies of missionaries, chancellors, and other worthies, together with some novels, English and French, and (translated) German, besides the saintly publications of which I made mention in my last. We have still summer here."—(Haileybury, 18th September 1844.)

The Reverend Sydney Smith died on the 22d of February 1845. Jeffrey's feelings on this calamity are expressed in the following letter to Mr. Smith's daughter, Mrs. Holland, on his first seeing her father's "Fragment on the Irish Roman Catholic Church:"—"E. I. College, Hertford, 2d April 1845. My very dear Saba—I have felt several times, in the last six weeks, that I ought to have written to some of you. But, in truth, my dear child, I had not the courage; and to-day I do it, not so much because I have the courage, as because I cannot help it. That startling and matchless *fragment* was laid on my table this morning, and, before I had read out the first sentence, the *real presence* of my beloved and incomparable friend was so brought before me, in all his brilliancy, benevolence, and flashing decision, that I seemed again to hear his voice, and read in his eye,—and burst into an agony

of crying. I went through the whole in the same state of feeling. My fancy kindled, and my intellect illumined, but my heart struck through with the sense of our loss, so suddenly and deeply impressed by this seeming restoration. I do not think he ever wrote anything so good, and I feel, mournfully, that there is no one now alive who could have so written. The effect, I am persuaded, will be greater than from any of his other publications. It is a voice from the grave. It relieves me to say all this, and you must forgive it. God bless you all! I have been here ten days with my daughter and grandchildren, as well as I have been through the winter, and living an innocent, quiet, patriarchal life, in love, peace, and sobriety. I merely passed through London, and do not feel tempted to encounter its perils or seductions. Yet I must run up for a day or two to have one more look of the friends I love there."

He was in the south of England as usual in 1846, and says of himself, while at Salterton,—"Empson is back at his work. The rest wait for me; all very well and very patient. Beautiful weather on the whole, though not warm; thermometer very steady, between fifty-two and fifty-eight, and much sunshine and calm, with a fine deep murmuring sea. I creep out twice a-day, and lead a dreamy, pensive, patient, poetical, sort of existence, without energy and without ennui, *fallentis semita vitæ*. I think I could muse on here contentedly enough till the end. It would save trouble."—(Salterton, 30th April 1846.)

And to Mrs. Smith, he says, from Derby, where he had been taken ill, on his way home,—"I have

indeed been very ill, and recover but very slowly, but I have little actual suffering, and hope to be a little less feeble and shaky yet before I die. Fortunately I have no anxiety, no low spirits, though the animal vitality is at times low enough, God knows! My affections and my enjoyment of beautiful nature, I thank heaven, are as fresh and lively, as in the first poetical days of my youth; and with these, there is nothing very miserable in the infirmities of age. We are taking two of our grandchildren down with us, and hope to have the whole household reunited at Craig*crookey* in the first days of July. They are all (except the poor patriarch who tells you so) in the full flush of hope and gaiety, and would make a brightness in a darker home than mine."

Notwithstanding all this, he arrived here in a very tolerable condition, and did his public duty effectually, and enjoyed his friends as much as ever, though in a quieter way.

His surviving sister, Mrs. Brown, died this autumn. No brother and sister could love each other more tenderly.

He went to the Isle of Wight in spring 1847, from which he writes Mrs. Craig,—"It is a great delight to me to have still, at my age, so many whom I can call old friends, and I have every day more reason to applaud myself for having, through life, been able to attach myself to young persons; since, if it were not so, I should now be without any cordial or secure affections, and fit only to enact the Methuselah of the family to my poor grandchildren."—(16th April 1847.) After leaving that place, and getting to London, he gives this account

of his recent life :—"We are just back from three weeks' very sweet, tranquil, and innocent, seclusion in the Isle of Wight, which we have left with much affection, and some regret; having sauntered and mused away our hours in full sympathy with the beautiful nature around us, and in cordial affection, and entire independence of each other." "We took a tender farewell of our Shanklin Oreads and Nereids yesterday, and after a rumbling drive across the island, and a tumbling voyage across the high swelling green waters, stopped with our whole patriarchal household of four children and four nurses at the very best hotel in England (the railway hotel at Gosport); from which we came whizzing up about two hours ago by an express train, ninety miles in two hours and a quarter."—(To me, London, 4th May 1847.)

Before leaving Edinburgh, he had sent £50 in aid of the Edinburgh Ragged School, in the establishment of which the Reverend Dr. Guthrie, a man of unwearying benevolence, chiefly in the haunts of neglected destitution, and one of the most eloquent of living preachers, took so able and effective a lead. His hope was that the school was to be opened, honestly and liberally, to children of all denominations; but being told, whether accurately or not, that there was some doubt about this, and being asked to interfere, he refused, saying, "I have resolved not to make my little donation to Guthrie's schools a title to interfere and lecture about their management." "The spirit you refer to is lamentable and unaccountable enough, but good will be done in spite of it; and we really must not lose heart, or hope, or even temper, because crotchets

with which we have no sympathy, make other good men not quite comfortable coadjutors in our notions of benevolence."—(To me, 4th May 1847.)

There was no one of the friends of his later acquisition for whom he had greater admiration or regard than Mr. Macaulay; and he testified the interest which he took in this great writer's fame by a proceeding, which, considering his age and position, is not unworthy of being told. This judge, of seventy-four, revised the proof sheets of the two first volumes of the History of England, with the diligence and minute care of a corrector of the press toiling for bread; not merely suggesting changes in the matter and the expression, but attending to the very commas and colons—a task which, though humble, could not be useless, because it was one at which long practice had made him very skilful. Indeed he used to boast that it was one of his peculiar excellences. On returning a proof to an editor of the Review, he says, "I have myself rectified most of the errors, and made many valuable verbal improvements in a small way. But my great task has been with the punctuation—on which I have as usual acquitted myself to admiration. And indeed this is the department of literature on which I feel that I most excel, and on which I am therefore most willing now to stake my reputation!!"

During the autumn of this year he contributed his last article to the Review. It was the able and elaborate paper on the claims of Watt and Cavendish as the discoverers of the composition of water, which was published in January 1848. It would have been better perhaps if his final effort had been

on a subject more congenial to his favourite tastes. But whether he shall turn out to be right, or to be wrong, in assigning the palm to his friend Watt, there can be no question as to the ability with which the evidence is discussed. He was always skilful in the art of arraying scientific proof. It is scarcely possible to resist the reasoning of his article in favour of Mr. Clerk being the inventor of the manœuvre of breaking the enemy's line in naval war (No. 101, art. 1); and yet there is an opposite and very reasonable view of this matter among good judges.

This year (1848) was clouded by several afflictions. Mrs. Jeffrey was taken dangerously ill at Haileybury in spring; and though she got better in the course of the year, she never made an entire recovery. His sufferings on this account were very severe. His brother John died on the 2d of July. And in a few weeks after this he had to submit to an operation for the extraction of a small wen in his leg. It was performed, with his usual skill, by Mr. Syme. Though slight in its own nature, it was severe on his nervous temperament, and compelled him to be cautious for a considerable time.

The year 1849, the last of his life, was passed wholly in Scotland.

His sister-in-law, Mrs. Robert Morehead, being very ill, he wrote a letter to her beginning thus:—"Edinburgh, 9th February 1849.—My ever dear Margaret—I cannot tell you how much I have been grieved by the account of your cruel illness. You are almost the only friend of my early life left to me in the world, and it is sad indeed to think of suffering and dangers gathering round you in

the evening of our day. Both Charlotte and I feel very deeply for your condition. But *I* have feelings and recollections in which she can have no share, and often find myself dwelling, in my sleepless nights, on the scenes of our youthful intimacy, and the dawnings of that cordial affection which it is a great consolation to think has ever subsisted unbroken between us." "And so heaven bless and keep you ever, my very dear Margaret. I wish I could write to you with a lighter heart; but it is a true and a loving one, at any rate, and *that* is a soothing in all sorrows; and I trust that the assurance of it may bring some lightening of affliction to you. With kindest remembrances to all your family."

She died on the 18th of that month.

The prize which he had founded when Rector of Glasgow, though regularly awarded, had never been finally arranged. On the 6th of November 1849, he wrote a full business letter to Principal Macfarlan, putting it on a permanent footing. He directs the interest of the money to be laid out annually on a gold medal, on one side of which the name of the gainer shall be engraved, and on the other the words, "Præmium Solenne in Academia Glasguensi, Francisci Jeffrey Alumni olim, non immemoris, Anno 1820 Rectoris, Donum." This medal is to be given, by the votes of his class fellows, to the most distinguished student in the Greek class. The letter ends thus,—"You, Sir, have long been the only member of your society who can remember me as a student within its walls, and it is with a mournful pleasure that I take this opportunity of bringing

myself individually to your recollection, and soliciting, for old acquaintance sake, some share of your indulgent regard. Since those days of our early youth, our ways of life have been widely apart; but I can say with truth that I have always cherished a tender and grateful recollection of the scenes in which we first met, and never ceased to take an interest in the pleasing accounts that have reached me of the prosperity and distinction to which you have attained. With my best wishes for their long continuance and increase, and with every sentiment of respect and esteem, believe me always."

Three days after this he left Craigcrook and came to Edinburgh for the winter. Before coming away he wrote to the Empsons. "Craigcrook, Friday, 9th November 1849, two o'clock.—Bless you, my dears! *Novissima hoc in agro conscribenda!* I have made a last lustration of all my walks and haunts, and taken a long farewell of garden, and terrace, and flowers, seas and shores, spiry towers and autumnal fields. I always bethink me that I may never see them again. And one day that thought will be a fact; and every year the odds run up terribly for such a consummation. But it will not be the sooner for being anticipated, and the anticipation brings no real sorrow with it."

As Mrs. Jeffrey continued to improve, he lived happily and quietly, and did his official work with alacrity and success. Even when the scene was just about to close, there were some gratifying exhibitions of his inextinguishable kindness and spirit. On the 4th and on the 6th of January 1850, he sent two letters of advice and encouragement, one

to Mr. Alexander Maclagan of Edinburgh, and one to Mr. John Crawford of Alloa, each of whom had presented him with a volume of his poems. Instead of turning from them in silence, he made each an answer so warm with friendly sympathy, that they will cherish these letters to their latest hours. And on the 18th of January he wrote that delightful letter to Mrs. Smith, now in her husband's works, in which he retracts a previous dissuasive against the publication of his friend's lectures, and urges her, with great cordiality, not to be misled by his first error, but to give them to the world.*

On Tuesday the 22d he was in court for the last time. He was then under no apparent illness; insomuch that, before going home, he walked round the Castle Hill, with his usual quickness of step, and alertness of gait. But he was taken ill that night of bronchitis and feverish cold; though seemingly not worse than he had often been. On the evening of Friday the 25th, he dictated a letter to the Lord President, saying that there was no chance of his being in court that week, "nor, I fear, very much even for the next. I shall not write again to you, therefore, till I can point out some prospect of again appearing in my place. But I do not think it improbable that my next communication to you will be to announce that I have resolved to resign my place on the bench." On the same evening he dictated the last letter he ever wrote to the Empsons. In reference to his old critical habits, parts

* At the period of his discouraging opinion, he had read but a few of the lectures, and these only in manuscript.

of it are very curious. It was long, and gave a full and clear description, of the whole course of his illness, from which he expected to recover, but had made up his mind not to continue longer on the bench. "I don't think I have had any proper sleep for the last three nights, and I employ portions of them in a way that seems to assume the existence of a sort of dreamy state, lying quite consciously in my bed with my eyes alternately shut and open," enjoying curious visions. He saw "part of a proof-sheet of a new edition of the Apocrypha, and all about Baruch and the Maccabees. I read a good deal in this with much interest," etc., and "a huge Californian newspaper, full of all manner of odd advertisements, some of which amused me much by their novelty. I had then prints of the vulgar old comedies before Shakspere's time, which were very disgusting." "I could conjure up the spectrum of a close printed political paper filled with discussions on free trade, protection, and colonies, such as one sees in the Times, the Economist, and the Daily News. I read the ideal copies with a good deal of pain and difficulty, owing to the smallness of the type, but with great interest, and, I believe, often for more than an hour at a time; forming a judgment of their merits with great freedom and acuteness, and often saying to myself,—'This is very cleverly put, but there is a fallacy in it, for so and so.'"

He died on the evening of the next day, Saturday, the 26th of January 1850, in his seventy-seventh year.

This event struck the community with peculiar sadness. On the occasion of no death of any illus-

trious Edinburgh man in our day, was the public sorrow deeper or more general. As soon as it was known that Jeffrey was gone, the eminence of his talents—the great objects to which they had ever been devoted—his elevation, by gradual triumphs, over many prejudices, to the highest stations—even the abundance of his virtues—were all forgotten, in the personal love of the man.

Some time, apparently in 1849, but the exact date cannot now be ascertained, he wrote a letter to the Empsons, with this passage—"Edinburgh, Sunday, 7th—I had a long walk with granny (Mrs. Jeffrey) after evening church, a beautiful setting sun, and long rays of levelled light blazing upon tower and tree, and from the high field windows, and the sky so crimson and yellow, between soft umbered clouds. We went into the Dean Cemetery,* which was resonant with blackbirds, and looked invitingly peaceful and cheerful. I rather think I must have a freehold there, though I have sometimes had a hankering after a *cubiculum* under those sweet weeping willows at Amwell, if one should be called away from the vicinage."

He expressed the same feeling about the cemetery of the Dean being his resting place to his niece Miss Brown within about two months of his death; and even pointed out to her the very spot where he said it gave him pleasure to believe that he would be laid.

He was laid there on the 31st. Several proposals were made for a public funeral; but it was thought better, and certainly more conformable to his character, that it should be quite private.

* Near Edinburgh, on the road to Craigcrook.

A meeting of his friends was held on the 7th of February 1850, to consider the propriety of taking measures for the erection of a public monument to his memory. Lord Dunfermline was called to the chair, and opened the business by a short, feeling, and sensible address. I had the honour of moving certain formal resolutions for putting matters into shape. These were seconded, in a few observations, by Professor Wilson, who said, "that a monument should be erected to such a man, was a demand from the heart of the nation, and would be gratifying in after ages to every lover of genius and virtue." A committee was appointed to carry the resolutions into effect. William Murray, Esquire, of Henderland, was chosen convener of this committee: a position to which his judgment and his long friendship with the deceased well entitled him, and which secured the object being attained quietly and effectually.

Mrs. Jeffrey never recovered the shock of her husband's death. She died at Haileybury on the 18th of May, and on the 29th her remains were laid beside his.

A majority of those present at a meeting of the committee on the 29th of November 1850 decided that the monument should be a marble statue, to be placed in the Outer House. The minority (of whom I was one) thought, that as the peculiar merits and services of Francis Jeffrey were of a popular nature, and not connected with the law, and that as the Outer House, though open to the people, is not habitually frequented by them, an architectural edifice would be more appropriate and useful. Mr. Steell has undertaken the execution of the statue, and everything

STATUE OF LORD JEFFREY

In the Parliament House, Edinburgh. (John Steell, R.S.A., Sculptor, 1855.)

may be confidently expected from an artist who, besides having seen the original, has given so many admirable proofs of his skill and taste. A bust, by the same artist, to be placed in the Advocates' Library, has been subscribed for by several members of the Faculty.

The best likeness of Jeffrey that exists is in the excellent portrait by Mr. Colvin Smith of Edinburgh, from which there has been a good engraving.

And so he passed away.

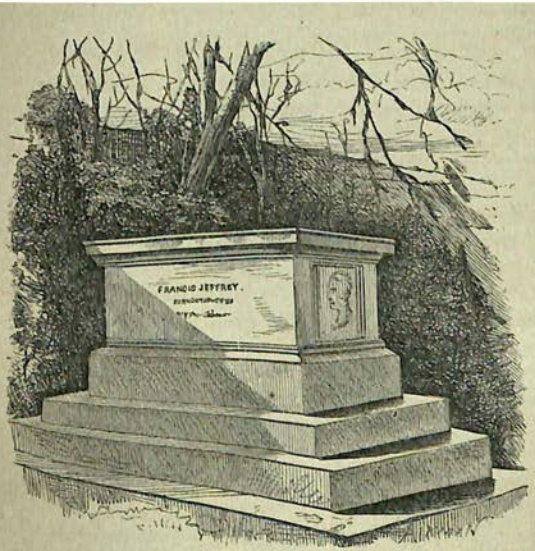
The preceding pages may enable those who did not know him to imagine what he was and what he did.

He was not so much distinguished by the predominance of any one great quality, as by the union of several of the finest. Rapidity of intellect, instead of misleading, as it often does, was combined in him with great soundness; and a high condition of the reasoning powers with an active and delightful fancy. Though not what is termed learned, his knowledge was various; and on literature, politics, and the philosophy of life, it was deep. A taste, exquisitely delicate and largely exercised, was one of the great sources of his enjoyment, and of his unmatched critical skill. But the peculiar charm of his character lay in the junction of intellectual power with moral worth. His honour was superior to every temptation by which the world could assail it. The pleasures of the heart were necessary for his existence

and were preferred by him to every other gratification, except the pleasures of conscience. Passing much of his time in literary and political contention, he was never once chilled by an unkind feeling, even towards those he was trying to overcome. An habitual gaiety never allowed its thoughtlessness, nor an habitual prudence its caution, to interfere with any claim of charity or duty. Nor was this merely the passive amiableness of a gentle disposition. It was the positive humanity of a resolute man, glowing in the conflicts of the world.

He prepared himself for what he did by judicious early industry. He then chose the most difficult spheres in which talent can be exerted, and excelled in them all; rising from obscurity and dependence to affluence and renown. His splendour as an advocate was exceeded by his eminence as a judge. He was the founder of a new system of criticism, and this a higher one than had ever existed. As an editor, and as a writer, he did as much to improve his country and the world as can almost ever be done, by discussion, by a single man. He was the last of four pre-eminent Scotchmen, who, living in their own country, raised its character and extended its reputation during the period of his career. The other three were Dugald Stewart, Walter Scott, and Thomas Chalmers; each of whom, in literature, philosophy, or policy, caused great changes; and each left upon his age the impression of the mind that produced them. Jeffrey, though surpassed in genius certainly by Scott, and perhaps by Chalmers, was inferior to none of them in public usefulness, or in the beauty of the means by which

he achieved it, or in its probable duration. The elevation of the public mind was his peculiar glory. In one respect alone he was unfortunate. The assaults which he led against error were efforts in which the value of his personal services can never be duly seen. His position required him to dissipate, in detached and nameless exertions, as much philosophy and beautiful composition as would have sustained avowed and important original works. He has raised a great monument, but it is one on which his own name is too faintly engraved.



JEFFREY'S TOMB, DEAN CEMETERY, EDINBURGH.

INSCRIPTION:

FRANCIS JEFFREY.
Born October 23, 1773. Died January 26, 1850.
Erected by his Friends.
MDCCCLI.

LIST OF LORD JEFFREY'S ARTICLES IN THE EDINBURGH REVIEW.

1. Mounier sur la Revolution de France.—No. 1, art. 1.
2. Southey's Thalaba.—No. 1, art. 8.
3. Herrenschwand, Adresse aux vrais-hommes de bien, etc. etc.—No. I. art. 13.
4. Bonnet sur l'Art de rendre Revolutions Utiles.—No. 1, art. 19.
5. Mackenzie's Voyages in North America.—No. 1, art. 22.
6. Playfair's Illustrations of the Huttonian Theory.—No. 1, art. 26.
7. Paley's Natural Theology.—No. 2, art. 3.
8. Denon's Travels in Egypt.—No. 2, art. 8.
9. Mrs. Hunter's Poems.—No. 2, art. 14.
10. Gentz, Etat de l'Europe.—No. 3, art. 1.
11. Hayley's Life of Cowper, vols. i. and ii.—No. 3, art. 5.
12. Thelwall's Poems.—No. 3, art. 21.
13. Miss Baillie's Plays on the Passions.—No. 4, art. 1.
14. Huttonian and Neptunian Geology.—No. 4, art. 5.
15. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's Works.—No. 4, art. 21.
16. De Lille, Malheur et Pitié, Poëme.—No. 5, art. 2.
17. Cambridge's Works.—No. 5, art. 4.
18. Millar's View of the English Government.—No. 5, art. 13.
19. Stewart's Life of Dr. Reid.—No. 6, art. 1.
20. Pictet, Voyage en Angleterre.—No. 6, art. 2.
21. Dr. Cririe's Scottish Scenery ; a Poem.—No. 6, art. 6.
22. Bentham, Principes de Legislation par Dumont.—No. 7, art. 1.
23. Holcroft's Travels from Hamburg to Paris.—No. 7, art. 6.
24. Hayley's Life of Cowper, vol. iii.—No. 8, art. 2.
25. Sotheby's Translation of the Georgics.—No. 8, art. 4.
26. Considerations on the Abolition of the Slave Trade.—No. 8, art. 17.
27. Richardson's Life and Correspondence.—No. 9, art. 2.
28. Barrow's Travels in China.—No. 10, art. 1.
29. Lord Teignmouth's Life of Sir W. Jones.—No. 10, art. 6.
30. Miss Baillie's Miscellaneous Plays.—No. 10, art. 12.
31. The Sabbath ; a Poem.—No. 10, art. 14.
32. Correspondence and Life of John Wilkes.—No. 10, art. 18.
33. Scott's Lay of the Last Minstrel.—No. 11, art. 1.
34. Mémoires de Bailly.—No. 11, art. 12.
35. Southey's Madoc ; a Poem.—No. 13, art. 1.
36. De Lille, Traduction de l'Eneide.—No. 13, art. 8.

37. Drummond's Academical Questions.—No. 13, art. 12.
38. Mémoires de Marmontel.—No. 14, art. 5.
39. Forsyth's Principles of Moral Science.—No. 14, art. 7.
40. The Frauds of the Neutral Flags.—No. 15, art. 1.
41. Cumberland's Memoirs.—No. 15, art. 8.
42. Lessing's Nathan the Wise.—No. 15, art. 11.
43. Smyth's English Lyrics.—No. 15, art. 12.
44. Raymond's Life of Dermody.—No. 15, art. 13.
45. Miss Edgeworth's Leonora.—No. 15, art. 16.
46. Mawman's Tour through Scotland.—No. 16, art. 4.
47. Franklin's Works.—No. 16, art. 7.
48. Bell on the Anatomy of Painting.—No. 16, art. 10.
49. Pinkerton's Recollections of Paris.—No. 16, art. 13.
50. Moore's Poems.—No. 16, art. 18.
51. Barrow's Voyage to Cochin China.—No. 17, art. 1.
52. Willan and Others on Vaccination.—No. 17, art. 3.
53. Craig's Life of Millar.—No. 17, art. 5.
54. Memoirs of Dr. Priestley.—No. 17, art. 9.
55. Lord Holland's Account of Lope de Vega.—No. 17, art. 16.
56. Montgomery's Poems.—No. 18, art. 6.
57. Proposed Reform of the Court of Session.—No. 18, art. 14.
58. The Dangers of the Country.—No. 19, art. 1.
59. Clarkson on Quakerism.—No. 19, art. 6.
60. Sir William Forbes' Life of Dr. Beattie.—No. 19, art. 12.
61. Sotheby's Saul; a Poem.—No. 19, art. 14.
62. Good's Translation of Lucretius.—No. 19, art. 15.
63. Cobbett's Political Register.—No. 20, art. 9.
64. Hope on Household Furniture.—No. 20, art. 14.
65. Catholic Question.—No. 21, art. 8.
66. Sir John Sinclair on Health and Longevity.—No. 21, art. 13.
67. Wordsworth's Poems.—No. 21. art. 14.
68. Espriella's Letters from England.—No. 22, art. 7.
69. Scott's Marmion.—No. 23, art. 1.
70. Crabbe's Poems.—No. 23, art. 8.
71. Fox's History of James II.—No. 24, art. 1.
72. Mrs. Hamilton's Cottagers of Glenburnie.—No. 24, art. 8.
73. Douce's Illustrations of Shakspere.—No. 24, art. 12.
74. The Life of Colonel Hutchinson.—No. 25, art. 1.
75. Fowling; a Poem.—No. 25, art. 4.
76. Curran's Speeches.—No. 25, art. 9.
77. Cevallos on the French Usurpation in Spain.—No. 25, art. 14.
78. Cromek's Reliques of Burns.—No. 26, art. 1.

79. Warburton's Letters.—No. 26, art. 5.
80. Campbell's Gertrude of Wyoming.—No. 27, art. 1.
81. Morehead's Discourses.—No. 27, art. 7.
82. Lettres du Prince de Ligne.—No. 27, art. 9.
83. Parliamentary Reform.—No. 28, art. 1.
84. Miss Edgeworth's Fashionable Tales.—No. 28, art. 7.
85. Barlow's Columbiad ; a Poem.—No. 29, art. 2.
86. Mrs. Montagu's Letters.—No. 29, art. 5.
87. Hamilton's Parliamentary Logic.—No. 29, art. 11.
88. Memoirs of Alfieri.—No. 30, art. 2.
89. Pamphlets on Vaccination.—No. 30, art. 5.
90. Correspondance de Madame du Deffand et de Mademoiselle de Lespinasse.—No. 30, art. 13.
91. The State of Parties.—No. 30, art. 15.
92. Letter on French Government.—No. 31, art. 1.
93. Crabbe's Borough.—No. 31, art. 2.
94. Grahame's British Georgics.—No. 31, art. 9.
95. Scott's Lady of the Lake.—No. 32, art. 1.
96. Staunton's Penal Code of China.—No. 32, art. 12.
97. Catholic Question.—No. 33, art. 1.
98. Stewart's Philosophical Essays.—No. 33, art. 9.
99. Parliamentary Reform.—No. 34, art. 1.
100. Letters of Madame du Deffand.—No. 34, art. 2.
101. Southey's Curse of Kehama.—No. 34, art. 11.
102. Alison on Taste.—No. 35, art. 1.
103. Ford's Dramatic Works.—No. 36, art. 1.
104. Scott's Vision of Don Roderick.—No. 36, art. 6.
105. Mrs. Grant on Highlanders.—No. 36, art. 12.
106. Hardy's Life of Lord Charlemont.—No. 37, art. 4.
107. Miss Baillie's Plays on the Passions, vol. iii.—No. 38, art. 1.
108. Wilson's Isle of Palms.—No. 38, art. 6.
109. Byron's Childe Harold.—No. 38, art. 10.
110. M'Crie's Life of John Knox.—No. 39, art. 1.
111. Miss Edgeworth's Tales of Fashionable Life.—No. 39, art. 7.
112. Chenevix's Plays.—No. 39, art. 11.
113. Mémoires de la Princesse de Bareith.—No. 40, art. 1.
114. Crabbe's Tales.—No. 40, art. 2.
115. Leckie on the British Government.—No. 40, art. 4.
116. Rejected Addresses.—No. 40, art. 10.
117. Madame de Staël sur la Littérature.—No. 41, art. 1.
118. Correspondance du Baron de Grimm.—No. 42, art. 1.
119. Byron's Giaour.—No. 42, art. 2.

120. Clarkson's Life of William Penn.—No. 42, art. 10.
121. State and Prospects of Europe.—No. 45, art. 1.
122. Byron's Corsair and Bride of Abydos.—No. 45, art. 9.
123. Correspondance du Baron de Grimm.—No. 46, art. 2.
124. Alison's Sermons.—No. 46, art. 9.
125. Wordsworth's Excursion; a Poem.—No. 47, art. 1.
126. Hogg's Queen's Wake.—No. 47, art. 8.
127. Tennant's Anster Fair.—No. 47, art. 9.
128. Waverley; a Novel.—No. 47, art. 11.
129. Scott's Lord of the Isles.—No. 48, art. 1.
130. Paradise of Coquettes.—No. 48, art. 8.
131. Southey's Roderick; the last of the Goths.—No. 49, art. 1.
132. Wordsworth's White Doe of Rylstone.—No. 50, art. 4.
133. Mémoires de Madame de Larochejaquelein.—No. 51, art. 1.
134. Southey's Lay of the Laureate.—No. 52, art. 8.
135. Wilson's City of the Plague.—No. 52, art. 10.
136. Hunt's Story of Rimini.—No. 52, art. 11.
137. Scott's Edition of Swift.—No. 53, art. 1.
138. Byron's Poetry.—No. 54, art. 1.
139. Wat Tyler and Mr. Southey.—No. 55, art. 7.
140. Tales of My Landlord.—No. 55, art. 9.
141. Franklin's Correspondence.—No. 56, art. 1.
142. Miss Edgeworth's Tales.—No. 56, art. 6.
143. Byron's Manfred.—No. 56, art. 7.
144. Hazlitt on Shakspere.—No. 56, art. 9.
145. Coleridge's Literary Life.—No. 56, art. 10.
146. Moore's Lalla Rookh.—No. 57, art. 1.
147. Byron's Beppo.—No. 58, art. 2.
148. Rob Roy.—No. 58, art. 7.
149. Hall's Voyage to Loo-Choo.—No. 58, art. 10.
150. Madame de Staël sur la Revolution Française.—No. 60, art. 1.
151. Prison Discipline.—No. 60, art. 9.
152. Rogers' Human Life; a Poem.—No. 62, art. 4.
153. Campbell's British Poetry.—No. 62, art. 11.
154. Dr. King's Memoirs.—No. 63, art. 4.
155. Crabbe's Tales of the Hall.—No. 63, art. 7.
156. State of the Country.—No. 64, art. 2.
157. Ivanhoe.—No. 65, art. 1.
158. Cornwall's Poems.—No. 65, art. 8.
159. Life of Curran.—No. 66, art. 1.
160. Dispositions of England and America.—No. 66, art. 6.
161. Edgeworth's Memoirs.—No. 67, art. 6.

162. The Sketch-Book.—No. 67, art. 8.
163. Keats' Poetry.—No. 67, art. 10.
164. Quaker Poetry.—No. 68, art. 4.
165. Cornwall's Marcian Colonna.—No. 68, art. 11.
166. Byron's Marino Faliero.—No. 70, art. 1.
167. Southey's Vision of Judgment; Laureate Hexameters.—No. 70, art. 9.
168. Bowdler's Family Shakspere.—No. 71, art. 3.
169. Madame de Staël.—No. 71, art. 4.
170. Byron's Tragedies.—No. 72, art. 5.
171. The Fortunes of Nigel.—No. 73, art. 8.
172. Simond's Switzerland.—No. 74, art. 1.
173. Bracebridge Hall.—No. 74, art. 3.
174. French Poetry.—No. 74, art. 6.
175. Wordsworth's Tour on the Continent.—No. 74, art. 8.
176. Moore and Byron.—No. 75, art. 2.
177. Cobbett's Cottage Economy.—No. 75, art. 5.
178. Secondary Scottish Novels.—No. 77, art. 9.
179. Dr. Meyrick on Ancient Armour.—No. 78, art. 4.
180. Brodie's Constitutional History.—No. 79, art. 5.
181. Malcolm's Central India.—No. 80, art. 9.
182. Dr. Lyall on Russia.—No. 80, art. 7.
183. Sketches of India, and Scenes in Egypt and Italy.—No. 81, art. 2.
184. Campbell's Theodoric, and other Poems.—No. 82, art. 1.
185. Goethe's Wilhelm Meister.—No. 84, art. 7.
186. Pepys' Memoirs.—No. 85, art. 2.
187. Combe's System of Phrenology.—No. 88, art. 1.
188. Moore's Life of Sheridan.—No. 89, art. 1.
189. Memoirs of the Emperor Baber.—No. 91, art. 2.
190. O'Driscol's History of Ireland.—No. 92, art. 7.
191. Lord Collingwood's Correspondence.—No. 94, art. 5.
192. Irving's Life and Voyages of Columbus.—No. 95, art. 1.
193. Atherstone's Fall of Nineveh; a Poem.—No. 95, art. 3.
194. Bishop Heber's Journal.—No. 96, art. 2.
195. Felicia Hemans.—No. 99, art. 2.
196. Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe.—No. 99, art. 4.
197. Naval Tactics. Breaking of the Enemy's Line.—No. 101, art. 1.
198. Memoirs of Sir James Mackintosh.—No. 125, art. 11.
199. Wilberforce's Correspondence.—No. 145, art. 2.
200. Watt or Cavendish?—No. 175, art. 3.

SELECTIONS

FROM

JEFFREY'S CORRESPONDENCE.

Attachment to Edinburgh, and Life at Oxford.

I HAVE already re-assumed that merriment of soul, that airiness of disposition, which has hitherto elevated me above the atmosphere of sorrow. Not yet ;—though the clouds of that atmosphere no longer oppress me with that intolerable load under which I panted at first. I feel that I shall never become attached to this place. There is nothing in it to interest me, and though I may cease to complain of my situation, it will only be through a dull and despairing resignation. I have succeeded too well in my attempts to form a local attachment to Edinburgh and its environs. My solitary walks, my afternoon wanderings by the Calton Hill and St. Bernard's, have imprinted those objects on my heart, and ensured their recollection while I shall continue to know myself.

My appearance is much altered since I came here. Do not, however, be apprehensive ; for, except some symptoms of the Swiss disease, I am in perfect health ; and indeed, while I am in the house, my appearance retains its old peculiarities. But without, a great black gown and the portentous square cap conceal the elegance of my form, and overshadow the majesty of my brow. To you I need not describe those habiliments, for you have seen them. Did I tell you the manner of our living here? We occupy, each of us, our separate apartments, and lock ourselves in at night. At seven o'clock we repair to prayers, and it would astonish you to witness the activity with which I spring up at that hour in this cold weather.

That detains us half-an-hour, after which most of us choose to walk till nine o'clock, at which hour a George (that is to say a round penny roll) is served up, with a bit of butter, upon a pewter plate, into each of our chambers, where we provide our own tea and sugar. We do not often breakfast alone, but generally order our George up to some friend's apartment, and breakfast sociably. From this time till three we do what we please, unless there be any lectures to attend; but at three, the trumpet's martial voice proclaims the hour of dinner, to which we all repair in the Common Hall, after having ordered, in our way through the kitchen, whatever part of the bill of fare we may choose. Allow me to satisfy your curiosity by informing you that we have a clean table-cloth every day. After dinner, we either return each to his own apartment, or, what is more common, two or three together, who generally drink or laugh till the hour of five warns the bellman to call us again to prayers. Very few of us take any tea—I have never yet. Our supper is served in the same way as breakfast. I have usually chosen to sup alone, and have not yet been out of bed beyond eleven. Our practice upon the road has been of some service in preparing me for those hours of sleeping and waking. You have now some idea how I live. Stupidly enough, is it not? I would willingly change it. This would be tedious to any other body; but, judging of your feelings by my own (and I hope you think that a compliment, as I meant it), I am convinced you will read it with satisfaction.

I used to think a hermit's life a pleasant one, and have often said that solitude is infinitely preferable to any but the best society. And, to say the truth, I still prefer it to most of the society I meet with here. But I cannot help regretting that which I have abandoned in Scotland; even those for whom, when they were present, I felt no affection nor regard, have become dear to me now that I can no longer enjoy their society. I do not like my tutor; I cannot bring him to be on that footing of intimacy to which I have brought all his predecessors. I long for some object to fill up the void which the abrupt dissolution of so many affections has left in my heart.

I feel I shall never be a great man, unless it be as a poet; for, though I have a boundless ambition, I am too much the

slave of my heart. If I were calmly reposed on the bosom of felicity, I would not leave my family to enjoy a triumph.

To his sister Mary. Oxford, Oct. 25, 1791.

Affection for the Moon.

Whence arises my affection for the moon? I do not believe there is a being, of whatever denomination, upon whom she lifts the light of her countenance, who is so glad to see her as I am! She is the companion of my melancholy, and the witness of my happiness. There are few people for the sake of whose society I should be glad to shut her out. I went half-a-mile yesterday to see her on the water, and to-night I have spent the most pleasant hour that I have known these six weeks in admiring her from my back window. This place should never be looked on but by moonlight, and then, indeed, what place does not look well? But there is something striking here—you recollect it—the deep and romantic shades on the sculptured towers—the sparkle of their gilded vanes—their black and pointed shadows upon the smooth green turf of our courts—the strong shades of the statues over the library—the yellow and trembling heads of the trees beyond them! Could I find anybody here who understood these matters, or who thought them worth being understood, I should regain my native enthusiasm and my wonted enjoyment; but they are all drunkards, or pedants, or coxcombs.

How little does happiness depend upon ourselves! Moralists may preach as they please, but neither temperance, nor fortitude, nor justice, nor charity, nor conscious genius, nor fair prospects, have power to make anybody happy for two days together. For the little power they have they are indebted to their novelty. In short, all our enjoyment here seems to depend upon a certain energy and vigour of mind, which depend upon—we know not what.

To his sister Mary. Queen's College, Oxford, Nov. 2, 1791.

Occupations of a Lady.

How do you employ your time? I often think the occupations of a lady—high as that title places the honoured bearer

—are of a more servile nature than that of a man, and retain some traces of the genius of those days when all the drudgery of the household was the amusement of its mistress. The employments of all men, who are not mechanics, are chiefly exertions of the mind. Those of the ladies are, in general, displays of mechanical ingenuity; and the wife of a lawyer, of a divine, and a poet, resemble, in their occupation, the industry of a weaver or a tailor more than that of her husband. For my part, I am astonished how you can continue so long in a state of inaction; and it is the sole foundation of my dislike to a mechanical profession, that it must stagnate and suspend those pleasing labours of the spirit, from which alone I can draw either pride or satisfaction.

To what a superior station of existence does not a taste for literature and a lively fancy elevate the mind! How much superior does it render a man to all wealth and power —to all fortune or fate. The source of the satisfaction I believe to be pride; but I love to feel it nevertheless. I shall not go to London this vacation. A little reflection and a little advice has determined me to keep where I am for another term. So, while you and all the world are laughing, and feasting, and rejoicing, I shall continue quietly and soberly, eating my commons, and reading my folios. I cannot say I feel either dejection or envy in the idea. May they be all as happy as they can, say I to myself, I shall be so much the more so. This is one advantage of the literary and philosophic turn—we scorn to owe our satisfaction to anything else; and so, when the more ordinary means of enjoyment are withheld, Pshaw! we say, we can do without them, and then begin to despise the splendour of courts.

To his sister Mary. Oxford, December 12, 1791.

On the Charm of Simplicity of Expression.

I fancy I have provoked you. I have entirely forgotten what I wrote in my last, but recollect that it was written immediately after a very hearty dinner, on a very cold and a very cloudy day. I conclude it was incredibly amusing. I beg your pardon—I excuse your silence—and I proceed. But I would excuse anything at present, for I am mollified and

melted to the very temper of a lamb within these three weeks, and all owing to the reading of some very large and admirably elegant books; which have so stupified and harassed my understanding, so exercised and confirmed my patience, and, withal, so petrified and deadened my sensibility, that I can no longer perceive or resent any injury or affront that might be offered me. I have just intellect enough remaining to suggest the impropriety of proclaiming this my unhappy state, so tempting to insult or malice; but I know to whom I confide the secret, and I know that I am safe; for benevolence and compassion, especially when allied to a genuine nobility of spirit, will never take advantage of infirmity or misfortune; and the assurance of impunity can only be a temptation to the ungenerous and unfeeling. Now I beg you would never think of copying such sentences as these—I mean when you write to me on any other occasion. I am sure your purer taste must render the caution superfluous. There is a charm in simplicity and naturality of expression, for which neither excellent sense, nor egregious sentiment, nor splendid diction, can compensate. But this simplicity, in this vile, conceited, and puerile age, it is infinitely difficult to acquire; and all our best writers since Shakspere, except the gentle Addison, and sometimes Sterne, have given up the attempt in despair, and trusted to gaudier vehicles for the conveyance of their respective reputations to the ears of posterity, and the mansion of fame; which practice, you will allow, is greatly to the prejudice of those who are taught to consider them as the models of fine writing. However, I intend in a year or two to correct the depravity of taste, and to revive the simple and the sublime in all their purity, and in all their majesty. This, you will perceive, is private and confidential. I wish you understood Latin, and particularly Greek, that you might understand what it is that I am talking about, in which wish I doubt nothing you join me most cordially. Now you conceive I am grown a pedant; that I have done nothing but read law and language and science since I came here. Shall I tell you the truth, though it would be a pity to undeceive you in an error so flattering to my diligence and industry? I never was so dissipated in my life.

To Miss Crockett (a cousin). Oxford, 9th March 1792.

On Uninteresting Companions.

Your worship has thought fit to keep me excluded from the circle of your new friends. But there is nothing in the world I detest so much as companions and acquaintances, as they are called. Where intimacy has gone so far as to banish reserve, to disclose character, and to communicate the reality of serious opinions, the connection may be the source of much pleasure —it may ripen into friendship, or subside into esteem. But to know half a hundred fellows just so far as to speak and walk and lounge with them; to be acquainted with a multitude of people, for all of whom together you do not care one farthing; in whose company you speak without any meaning, and laugh without any enjoyment; whom you leave without any regret, and rejoin without any satisfaction; from whom you learn nothing, and in whom you love nothing—to have such a set for your society, is worse than to live in absolute solitude; and is a thousand times more pernicious to the faculties of social enjoyment, by circulating in its channels a stream so insipid. Thus we form men of the world—the most unhappy and most unamiable of beings.

To Mr. John Jeffrey. Edinburgh, 30th March 1793.

On Brooding over Calamities.

Though I never experienced more sorrow and regret than during the period of my late visit, I am now well pleased that I have made it, since I have seen that reality which my imagination had so far outgone. I will not speak to you of what has happened,* nor trust myself to offer you consolation on a subject where I am not sufficiently indifferent to be convincing. We cannot but remember such things were, nor would we wish, I think, to forget them. There is a sanctity in such recollections which elevates and refines; a tenderness which endears while it distresses; and from which it is not by indifference that we wish to be relieved. It is needless to say more. These impressions are to be preserved, and to be reserved; by them we are restored to those from whom we

* Death of Mr. Morehead senior.

have parted, and enabled to converse with those who yet live in our affections. Yet it is not fit that this temper be indulged to the utmost. That unfortunate disposition of mind which, under the cover of an amiable tendency, is apt to establish itself in the breast; which leads us to lose the present in the remembrance of the past, and extends to the entire and varied scenes of felicity the gloom which may darken its immediate confines; which broods deeply over calamities which admit not of relief, and grows insensible to comfort by the habitual contemplation of distress—such a disposition is, of all others, the most to be repressed, and the most to be apprehended. We mourn not for the dead, but for the living; we weep for our own misfortunes; and we ought to be ashamed of an excess in the indulgence of a feeling which borders pretty nearly upon selfishness. I do not say this because I think it applicable or necessary in your case, but because I feel it to be true, and because I can say nothing else upon a subject on which it is impossible for me to be silent.

To Mr. Robert Morehead. Edinburgh, 25th June 1793.

Egotism of Letters.

Have you ever observed that the letters of friends are filled with egotism? For my part I think very suspiciously of every letter that is not, and propose my own as a model to you in this respect. Indeed when a man writes, as I do now, merely from the loquacity of friendship, and the recollection of personal intimacy, what subject can he have but himself, or the person to whom he writes? His letter, therefore, will be a succession of egotisms and inquiries, which will fall to be answered by egotisms and retaliated inquiries. Such letters are to me always the most interesting, and indeed the only interesting; for surely whatever you tell me, or whatever reflection you make, might have been conveyed to me by any other channel, and is only interesting by its distant relation to you. I believe this is true with every other composition as well as letters, and all the pathetic passages in an author will be found to be egotistical to the feelings of the speaker. For as no other can feel as strongly a man's situa-

tion as himself, his own account of it must always be the most animated and more engaging, for the most part, than his account of anything else.

To Mr. Robert Morehead. Herbertshire, 22d Dec. 1795.

Prevention of Weariness.

A man must have something to do in order to prevent him from wearying of his own existence; and something it must be, imposed upon him to do, under more precise and specific penalties than that of the mere weariness that he would feel by neglecting it. So that if he be not in such a situation as will sometimes oblige him to complain of the drudgery to which he is tasked, he will generally find himself in a situation much more to be complained of. This is a very comfortable philosophy, and very convenient for the cure of discontent, though it is often rejected when the fit is on, and can only be forced down by the great vigour and perseverance on the part of the prescriber. Taken, however, along with a due proportion of experience, it has been found very efficacious as a preventative. Though I have so much business as to need the application of these profound reflections, I begin to weary of myself too, I think, sometimes, and take up a very contemptible notion of the value of my solitary employments. I find that I can order my own thoughts, and pursue to a clear conclusion any speculation that occurs, with infinitely greater ease in the course of conversation, than by thinking or writing in my study; and that, independently of the information I may derive by observing the course of thought in my companions. I have determined to extend my acquaintance a little wider this season than I have hitherto done, and to accustom myself to that extemporary exertion which the purposes of society require. One is apt, I know, to conceive an undue contempt for the world by living too much apart from it; and to acquire a kind of dictatorial and confident manner by pursuing all one's speculations without the interference of anybody, or the apprehension of any corrector. My situation is not very favourable to any scheme of making new acquaintances; but this will only lead me to make them more select, as it will limit them to a few. I read nothing but the most idle

kind of books, and write nothing but what I am paid for, except these letters to you, and one or two more, who are contented to take them as they are. Of my reading, and the profit I am likely to derive from it, you may judge from the pile of books that were brought up to me half an hour ago from the library. There are letters from Scandinavia, a collection of curious observations upon Africa, Asia, and America, a book of old travels, an absurd French folio romance, and I don't know what besides. I ought to mention though, that I have begun to read Plato's Republic, though I advance with a most cautious slowness in it. I have resolved too, as I believe I told you before, to read a regular course of chemistry this season, and am just wavering and deciding whether I should enter into a class for the winter that will be formed in a week hereafter.

To Mr. Robert Morehead. Edinburgh, 26th Nov. 1796.

The Way of the World.

What, my dear Bobby, are we turning into? I grow, it appears to myself, dismally stupid and inactive. I lose all my originalities, and ecstasies, and romances, and am far advanced already upon that dirty highway called the way of the world. I have a kind of unmeaning gaiety that is fatiguing and unsatisfactory, even to myself; and though, in the brilliancy of this sarcastic humour, I can ridicule my former dispositions with admirable success, yet I regret the loss of them much more feelingly, and really begin to suspect that the reason and gross common sense by which I now profess to estimate everything, is just as much a vanity and delusion as any of the fantasies it judges of. This at least I am sure of, that these poetic visions bestowed a much purer and more tranquil happiness than can be found in any of the tumultuous and pedantic triumphs that seem now within my reach; and that I was more amiable, and quite as respectable, before this change took place in my character. I shall never arrive at any eminence either in this new character; and have glimpses and retrospective snatches of my former self, so frequent and so lively, that I shall never be wholly estranged from it, nor more than half the thing I seem to be

driving at. Within these few days I have been more perfectly restored to my poesies and sentimentalities than I had been for many months before. I walk out every day alone, and as I wander by the sunny sea, or over the green and solitary rocks of Arthur Seat, I feel as if I had escaped from the scenes of impertinence in which I had been compelled to act, and recollect, with some degree of my old enthusiasm, the wild walks and eager conversation we used to take together at Herbertshire about four years ago. I am still capable, I feel, of going back to these feelings, and would seek my happiness, I think, in their indulgence, if my circumstances would let me. As it is, I believe I shall go on sophisticating and perverting myself till I become absolutely good for nothing.

To Mr. Robert Morehead. Edinburgh, 6th Aug. 1798.

On Matrimony.

Before the month of November, I hope to have renounced all the iniquities and unhappinesses of a bachelor, and to be deeply skilled in all the comforts of matrimony before the end of the year. I enter upon the new life with a great deal of faith, love, and fortitude ; and not without a reasonable proportion of apprehension and anxiety. I never feared anything for myself, and the excessive carelessness with which I used to look forward when my way was lonely, has increased, I believe, this solicitude for my companion. I am not *very* much afraid of our quarrelling or wearying of each other, but I am not sure how we shall bear poverty ; and I am sensible we shall be very poor. I do not make £100 a year, I have told you, by my profession. You would not marry in this situation ? and neither would I, if I saw any likelihood of its growing better before I was too old to marry at all ; or did not feel the desolation of being in solitude as something worse than any of the inconveniences of poverty. Besides, we trust to Providence, and have hopes of dying before we get into prison.

To Mr. John Jeffrey. St. Andrews, 1st August 1801.

Breaking up of Old Intimacies and Edinburgh Review.

There is something dolorous in the breaking up of long intimacies, and the permanent separation of those who have spent so much of their life together. We have spent too much of it together though, I am persuaded, ever to fall off from an intimacy, and shall speak to each other with familiarity, although we should not meet for twenty years to come. I can answer for myself at least, in spite of all the change that marriage is to make upon me. What the Church may work on you, I cannot so positively determine. I met with an old sonnet of yours this morning, on the first fall of snow in December 1794, which brought back to my mind many very pleasing recollections. Indeed, there is no part of my life that I look back upon with so much delight as the summer days we loitered at Herbertshire, in the first year of our acquaintance. I date the beginning of it from the time of your father's death, and often call to mind the serene and innocent seclusion in which we then lived from the world. I should be sorry if I could not live so again, and am sure that I could be as pure, and as careless, and as romantic, if I had only as much leisure, and as pliant a companion.

I have nothing new to tell you of. Our review has been postponed till September, and I am afraid will not go on with much spirit even then. Perhaps we have omitted the tide that was in our favour. We are bound for a year to the booksellers, and shall drag through that, I suppose, for our own indemnification ; but I foresee the likelihood of our being all scattered before another year shall be over, and, of course, the impossibility of going on on the footing upon which we have begun. Indeed, few things have given me more vexation of late than the prospect of the dissolution of that very pleasant and animated society in which I have spent so much of my time for these last four years, and I am really inclined to be very sad when I look forward to the time when I shall be deserted by all the friends and companions who possessed much of my confidence and esteem. You are translated into England already. Horner goes to the English bar in a year. S. Smith leaves this country for ever about the same time. Hamilton spends his life abroad as soon as his father's death sets him at

liberty. Brougham will most probably push into public life, even before a similar event gives him a favourable opportunity. Reddie is lost, and absolutely swallowed up in law. Lord Webb leaves us before winter. Jo. Allen goes abroad with Lord Holland immediately. Adam is gone already, and, except Brown and Jo. Murray, I do not think that one of the associates with whom I have speculated and amused myself will be left with me in the course of eighteen months. It is not easy to form new intimacies, and I know enough of the people among whom I must look for them, to be positive that they will never be worthy of their predecessors. Comfort me, then, my dear Bobby, in this real affliction, and prove to me, by your example, that separation is not always followed by forgetfulness, and that we may still improve and gladden each other at a distance.

To Robert Morehead. Edinburgh, 24th May 1802.

Edinburgh Review.

By this time I suppose the third number of the Review will have reached you, and I begin already to feel some impatience for your own opinion of its merits, and your account of its reception in London. If you are disposed to be very severe, I shall probably remind you that it is your own fault that it is no better, and that you are more responsible for our blunders than those substitutes of yours by whom they were committed. Do not imagine, however, that I was not very much moved with your contrition and conscientious qualms. I would grant you a fuller remission, if I were not afraid that the easiness of your penance might tempt you to a second transgression. To say the truth, I had not much expectation from the very eloquent and urgent expostulation I addressed to you, and had made up my mind to go on without you before it was sent away. This time, however, we really depend upon you; and, after your engagements and blushes, I shall be obliged to suspect that you are not to be depended upon at all if you disappoint us. That you may have an opportunity of exercising your sagacity, I shall let you guess at the authors of the different articles before I disclose them; and that you may give the London opinion without bias or prepossession, I shall not tell

you till I hear it, what that is which preponderates in Edinburgh. There is much judgment, I beg leave to assure you, in this specimen of *reticence*, whatever you may think of its eloquence.

There is one thing, however, that I will tell you. In consequence of a negotiation conducted by Smith during my absence, Constable and Longman have agreed to give £50 a number to the editor, and to pay £10 a sheet for all the contributions which the said editor shall think worth the money. The terms are, as Mr. Longman says, "without precedent;" but the success of the work is not less so, and I am persuaded that if the money be well applied, it will be no difficult matter to ensure its continuance. Now, my sage councillor, this editorship will be offered to me in the course of a few days, and, though I shall not give any definite answer till I hear from you, and consult with some of my other friends, I will confess that I am disposed to accept of it. There are *pros* and *cons* in the case no doubt. What the *pros* are I need not tell you. £300 a year is a monstrous bribe to a man in my situation. The *cons* are—vexation and trouble, interference with professional employment and character, and risk of general degradation. The first I have had some little experience of, and am not afraid for. The second, upon a fair consideration, I am persuaded I ought to risk. It will be long before I make £300 more than I now do by my profession, and by far the greater part of the employment I have will remain with me, I know, in spite of anything of this sort. The character and success of the work, and the liberality of the allowance, are not to be disregarded. But what influences me the most is, that I engaged in it at first gratuitously, along with a set of men whose character and situation in life must command the respect of the multitude, and that I hope to go on with it as a matter of emolument along with the same associates.

To Francis Horner. Edinburgh, 11th May 1803.

The Same.

I am glad you have got our Review, and that you like it. Your partiality to my articles is a singular proof of your

judgment. In No. 3, I do Gentz, Hayley's Cowper, Sir J. Sinclair, and Thelwall. In No. 4, which is now printing, I have Miss Baillie's Plays, Comparative View of Geology, Lady Mary Wortley, and some little ones. I do not think you know any of my associates. There is the sage Horner, however, whom you have seen, and who has gone to the English bar with the resolution of being Lord Chancellor; Brougham, a great mathematician, who has just published a book upon the Colonial Policy of Europe, which all you Americans should read; Rev. Sydney Smith, and P. Elmsley, two learned Oxonian priests, full of jokes and erudition; my excellent little Sanscrit Hamilton, who is also in the hands of Bonaparte at Fontainebleau; Thomas Thomson and John Murray, two ingenious advocates; and some dozen of occasional contributors, among whom the most illustrious, I think, are young Watt of Birmingham, and Davy of the Royal Institution. We sell 2500 copies already, and hope to do double that in six months, if we are puffed enough. I wish you could try if you can *répandre* us upon your continent, and use what interest you can with the literati, or rather with the booksellers of New York and Philadelphia. I believe I have not told you that the concern has now become to be of some emolument.

To Mr. John Jeffrey. Edinburgh, 2d July 1803.

Poets.

I am amused with your audacity in imputing fastidiousness to me. I am almost as great an admirer as Sharpe. The only difference is that I have a sort of consciousness that admirers are ridiculous, and therefore I laugh at almost everything I admire, or at least let people laugh at it without contradiction. You must be in earnest when you approve, and have yet to learn that everything has a respectable and a deridable aspect. I meant no contempt to Wordsworth by putting him at the head of the poetical firm. I classed him with Southey and Coleridge, who were partners once, and have never advertised their secession. We shall be overwhelmed with poetry. Scott's Lay is in the press too, and will be out by November. There is a set here as much infatuated about it, as you were

with Mackintosh. W. Erskine recited me half a canto last night, which he says is inimitable; and I acquiesced with a much better grace, I am sure, than you did to Sharpe's raptures upon Wordsworth. I am only afraid that they have persuaded Scott into the same opinion, and that the voice of impartiality will sound to him like malignity or envy. There is no help —justice must be done, and I, like the executioner, shall kiss him, and whirl him off, if the sentence be against him. I rather think though that he will be acquitted. Talking of poets, I have a desponding epistle from poor Campbell, in which he says that his health is bad, and that his spirits are worn down by staring all day in a newspaper office. This is lamentable. I wish you would walk to Pimlico, and comfort him. Is it not possible to get something done for him? Wilna was better than a newspaper office. A race-horse is better at grass than in a plough. He has promised some reviews, but I am sceptical as to London promises; and, besides, I doubt very much if his performance will be laudable. I wish you would think though if anything could be done for him in India, Ireland, or anywhere, etc.

To Francis Horner, Esq. Edinburgh, 3d September 1804.

Fatiguing Pastimes.

I grow every day more familiar with these impressions as to the insignificance of life, and the absurdity of being much concerned about anything that it presents, which have more than once excited your indignation already, so that I am afraid we should not agree very well in our premises. Labour and exertion do infinitely less for our happiness and our virtue than you stern philosophers will allow yourselves to believe; and half the pains and suffering to which we are exposed arise from the mortification of this ridiculous self-importance which is implied in all your heroic toils. This you think spleen and paradox; but it was my creed before I was splenetic, and a creed that conducted me to happiness. And what, my dear Horner, are all your labours for reputation, and distinction, and the esteem of celebrated persons, but fatiguing pastimes, and expensive preparatives for the indulgence of those affections that are already within your own reach? I do think

ambition a folly and a vice, except in a school-boy, and conceive it to be evident that it leads to unhappiness, whether it be gratified or disappointed.

To Francis Horner, Esq. Edinburgh, 9th March 1806.

Isle of Wight.

The said isle is very well worth visiting, and I have some hope of leading you over its beauties one day when I am rich, and idle, and happy. On the side next the mainland it is finely wooded, and swelled into smooth hills, and divided by broad friths, and inlets of various and fantastical appearance. But the chief beauty, I think, lies on the south, where it opens to the wide ocean, and meets a warmer sun than shines upon any other spot of our kingdom. On this side, it is, for the most part, bounded by lofty chalk cliffs, which rise, in the most dazzling whiteness, out of the blue sea into the blue sky, and make a composition something like Wedgewood's enamel. The cliffs are in some places enormously high; from 600 to 700 feet. The beautiful places are either where they sink deep into bays and valleys, opening like a theatre to the sun and the sea, or where there has been a terrace of low land formed at their feet, which stretches under the shelter of that enormous wall, like a rich garden plot, all roughened over with masses of rock, fallen in distant ages, and overshadowed with thickets of myrtle, and roses, and geraniums, which all grow wild here in great luxuriance and profusion. These spots are occupied, for the most part, by beautiful ornamented cottages, designed and executed, for the most part, in the most correct taste. Indeed, it could not be easy to make anything ugly in a climate so delicious, where all sorts of flowers, and shrubs, and foliage multiply and maintain themselves with such vigour and rapidity. The myrtles fill all the hedges, and grapes grow in festoons from tree to tree, without the assistance of a wall. To the west, the land rises into lofty and breezy downs, and at the extreme point the land has been worn down, by the violence of the sea, into strange detached fragments of white rock, which people call needles, and come a long laborious way to see. They are the only ugly things upon the island. We walked a great deal

here, and saw everything at our leisure, by sunlight and moonlight, alone and in a body. I had many delightful reveries, which I shall one day dilate to you ; but at present I am scribbling with all possible rapidity, in order to save the post, which goes out almost immediately. We crossed this morning to Lymington, and came here through the New Forest. This is a fine scene too, and the last of the fine scenes I believe I shall see in England; fine oak wood, spread over rough, uneven country for thirty miles, opening, every now and then, into fine open pastoral villages, and broken by heathy mountains, and the windings of a broad arm of the sea; —the day hot and still, mostly cloudy, but with spots and streams of yellow sunshine falling upon the remote and prominent parts of the deep woody circle, and contrasting with the blue vapoury appearance of that distance which remained in shade.

To Mrs. Morehead. Southampton, 1st September 1806.

On the Duty of Marriage.

Not many things in this world could give me greater pleasure than the affectionate tone of your letter, and the pleasing picture it holds out to me. You are doing exactly what you should do ; and if my approbation is at all necessary to your happiness you may be in ecstasy. I think all men who are capable of rational happiness ought to marry. I think you in particular likely to derive happiness from marrying ; and I think the woman whom you have chosen peculiarly calculated to make you happy. God bless you. You have behaved hitherto with admirable steadiness and magnanimity, and have earned the confidence of all your friends, as well as the means of enjoyment. I cannot lament your nationality very bitterly, both because it holds of all that is happy and amiable, and because I hope it will give us a chance of seeing you often among us. Besides, when you have Scottish tones and smiles perpetually before you, London will become a sort of Scotland to you. You have but two faults in your character, and I think marriage will go a great way to cure them both. One is a little too much ambition, which really is not conducive to happiness ; and the other, which arises I believe from the former, is a small degree of misanthropy, particularly towards

persons of your own profession. Your wife's sweetness of temper will gradually bring you into better humour with the whole world, and your experience of the incomparable superiority of quiet and domestic enjoyments to all the paltry troubles that are called splendour and distinction, will set to rights any other little errors that may now exist in your opinions. At all events, you will be delivered from the persecution of my admonitions, as it would be a piece of unpardonable presumption to lecture a man who has a wife to lecture him at home.

To Charles Bell, Esq. Edinburgh, 4th April 1811.

London Life.

This is now my last day in London, and burning hot it is. Even the east wind, I think, would be delightfully refreshing; and though I have been courting the air in the shady walks of the Park, I feel the heat of the hotel quite suffocating. I wrote yesterday to John, and brought my journal up to that forenoon, and now I proceed. Drove out before dinner with Mrs. Pigou to Kensington—a most lovely afternoon—horse chestnuts in magnificent bloom—the grass so fresh and velvet green after the rains, and the water so cool and blue. We stopped under a May bush in full blossom, and filled the carriage nearly full of it. Came home rather too late for dinner, and went to Nugent's (a brother of Lord N., and a great traveller), where we had an assemblage of wits and fine gentlemen—our old friends Ward, and Smith, and Brougham, and Milnes, who threatened last year to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Brummell, the most complete fine gentleman in all London, and Luttrell, and one or two more. The repast was exceedingly voluptuous. The talk on the whole good. I had a long quiet chat with Ward, who is, after all, I think, the cleverest and most original man in this pretending society. About eleven I went to the opera with Smith, who left me in the most perfidious manner in the Princess' box, out of which I found it impossible to escape for nearly a whole hour; during all which no one individual looked in upon her deserted royalty. It was really a pitiable spectacle to see her and poor Lady —— reflecting each other's ennui

from the two corners of their superb canopy, struggling for a laugh in the middle of a yawn, and sinking under the weight of their lonely dignity. I then went to Mrs. Spencer, who was nearly as lonely, and got home (after the usual scene of squeezing) about one. To-day, Dicky Bright not having come as he promised, I went up to breakfast with my friend Mr. Simond, and took him to see Lord Elgin's marbles. I afterwards called on Brougham and Kennedy, and recruited myself with a walk in the Park. I am now about to dress to go to Holland House, where I hear there is to be a great party. To-morrow my travelling companions breakfast here, and we set off about eleven. I shall finish this epistle either in the morning or on the road. In the meantime heaven bless you.

Monday morning, three o'clock.—Well, my London campaign is closed at last, thank heaven! and I cannot go to bed till I render you this last account of it. Mrs. Pigou offered to set me down at Holland House in her carriage; so we went through the Park about seven in the most beautiful but sultry evening—calm, blue, and silver water, noble trees, fragrant shrubs and clouds, and masses of blossom—the whole air as you go up Holland Park is perfumed with briars, May lilies, and a thousand fragrant shrubs. Inside the assembly was great. The old Duke of Norfolk, almost as big and as fond of wine as Lord Newton,* but with the air and tone and conversation of an old baron bidding defiance to his sovereign. Lords Say and Sele, Harrington, Besborough, Cowper, Dundas, etc., with Dudley North, a wit and patriot of the old Fox school, breaking out every now and then into little bursts of natural humour. Ladies Besborough, Cowper, Caroline Lambe, etc. A most magnificent repast, and Lady Holland in great gentleness and softness; sat between D. North and the Duke, and had a good deal of talk with both. In the drawing-room had much conversation with Lady C. Lambe, who is supposed to be more witty and eccentric than any lady in London, but it did not appear to me very charming. Was brought home by Lord Dundas about twelve, and went by appointment to the

* A Scotch Judge.

Pigous, where we had a very quiet and really very pleasing evening till this moment.

To Mrs. Morehead. London, Sunday, 12th May 1811.

Love of Scotland.

I believe I could not live anywhere out of Scotland. All my recollections are Scottish, and consequently all my imaginations; and though I thank God that I have as few fixed opinions as any man of my standing, yet all the elements out of which they are made have a certain national cast also. In short, I will not live anywhere else if I can help it; nor die either; and all old Esky's* eloquence would have been thrown away in an attempt to persuade me that *banishment furth the kingdom* might be patiently endured. I take more to Roscoe, however; he is thoroughly good-hearted, and has a sincere, though foolish, concern for the country. I have also found out a Highland woman with much of the mountain accent, and sometimes get a little girl to talk to. But with all these resources, and the aid of the botanical garden, the time passes rather heavily, and I am in some danger of dying of ennui, with the apparent symptoms of extreme vivacity. Did you ever hear that most of the Quakers die of stupidity — actually and literally? I was assured of the fact the other day by a very intelligent physician who practised twenty years among them, and informs me that few of the richer sort live to be fifty, but die of a sort of atrophy, their cold blood just stagnating by degrees among their flabby fat. They eat too much, he says, take little exercise, and, above all, have no nervous excitement. The affection is known in this part of the country by the name of *the Quaker's disease*, and more than one-half of them go out so. I think this curious, though not worth coming to Liverpool to hear, or writing from Liverpool, etc.

To J. A. Murray, Esq. (afterwards Lord Murray).
Liverpool, 20th August 1813.

* Lord Eskgrove, a Judge, who consoled a friend he was obliged to banish, by assuring him that there really were places in the world, such as England for example, where a man, though out of Scotland, might live with some little comfort. (See Memorials, page 103.)

A Farewell.

I think now that we shall embark to-morrow, and have to bid you heartily farewell. I hope to be back in December; but you need not give me over for lost, although I should not appear quite so soon. I have explained to Margaret the grounds upon which I look upon the hazard of detention as extremely slight in any case, and have nothing more to add on that subject, of which I take a more correct view than any of the talkers or newspaper politicians, who may be pleased to have another opinion. I am almost ashamed of the degree of sorrow I feel at leaving all the early and long-prized objects of my affection; and though I am persuaded I do right in the step which I am taking, I cannot help wishing that it had not been quite so wide and laborious a one. You cannot think how beautiful Hatton appears at this moment in my imagination, nor with what strong emotion I fancy I hear Tuckey* telling a story on my knee, and see Margaret poring upon her French before me. It is in your family that my taste for domestic society and domestic enjoyments has been nurtured and preserved. Such a child as Tuckey I shall never see again in this world. Heaven bless her; and she will be a blessing both to her mother and to you.

But I must proceed to business. In this packet you will find my picture, which you will present, with my best love and affection, to Margaret. I have sent my will to George Bell, with instructions to bring it to you, if the time comes for using it.

I have got your volume of poems, which I read very often, and shall make Miss Wilkes read. Poetry is a great source of delight, but not with a view to consequences. The greatest and most delighted poets cared least about its success. Homer and Shakspere gave themselves no concern about who should praise or ridicule them; and the charm of the thing is gone, I think, as soon as the poet allows any visions of critics or posterity to come across him. He is then in very worldly company, and is a very worldling himself, in so far as he feels any anxiety about their proceedings. If I were you, however, I would live more with Tuckey, and be

* A nickname for one of Mr. Morehead's daughters.

satisfied with my gardening and pruning—with my preaching —a good deal of walking, and comfortable talking. What more has life? and how full of vexation are all ambitious fancies and perplexing pursuits! Well, God bless you! Perhaps I shall not have an opportunity to inculcate my innocent epicurism upon you for a long time again. It will do you no harm. The weather is fine, and, they say, is like to continue so through this moon. I think Margaret should get somebody to be with her during a part, at least, of the autumn. She has been so long accustomed to our chat, and even to my writing, that when there is a pause, I am afraid she may grow dull upon it. You must cheer her, and not let her dwell on alarms, even when you may fancy that there are some grounds for them. I am glad you like my W. Penn. I have an affection for that kind of man myself; but there can be no such person in the present age. If you have a mind to try your hand at a review, it would be obliging; but, perhaps, this is coming too much into the worldly contest and weary struggle, for your views.

Do not let Tuckey forget me, and breed up Lockhart* to admire me. Bill I often remember too with great kindness, and also Charles†—the young parson's† meek and cheerful visage I duly recall with blessings.

To Robert Morehead. Liverpool, 28th August 1813.

On his conducting of the Edinburgh Review.

You need make no apology for your principles to me. I have never for an instant considered them as other than just and noble. As an old friend and countryman, I am proud of their purity and elevation, and should have no higher ambition, if I were at all in public life, than to share and enforce them. I say this with reference to your attachment to party, your regard to character, and your candour and indulgence to those of whom you have to complain. Situated as I am, at a distance from all active politics, the two first strike me as less important, and I give way to my political and constitutional carelessness without any self-reproach. If I were in your place it is probable I should feel differently, but these are none of

* Another of Mr. Morehead's children. † Two of his boys.

the matters on which I should ever think of quarrelling with your principles of judgment.

Neither will I deny that the Review might have been more firmly conducted, and greater circumspection used to avoid excesses of all sorts. Only the anxiety of such a duty would have been very oppressive to me, and I have ever been slow to believe the matter of so much importance as to impose it absolutely upon me. I have not, however, been altogether without some feelings of duty on the subject; and it is as to the limits and extent of these that I am inclined to differ with you. Perhaps it would have been better to have kept more to general views. But in such times as we have lived in, it was impossible not to mix them, as in fact they mix themselves, with questions which might be considered as of a narrower and more factious description. In substance it appeared to me that my only absolute duty as to political discussion was, to forward the great ends of liberty, and to exclude nothing but what had a tendency to promote servile, sordid, and corrupt principles. As to the *means* of attaining these ends, I thought that considerable latitude should be indulged, and that unless the excesses were very great and revolting, every man of talent should be allowed to take his own way of recommending them. In this way it always appeared to me that a considerable diversity was quite compatible with all the consistency that should be required in a work of this description, and that doctrines might very well be maintained in the same number which were quite irreconcilable with each other, except in their common tendency to repress servility, and diffuse a general spirit of independence in the body of the people. This happens, I take it, in every considerable combination of persons for one general end; and in every debate on a large and momentous question, I fancy that views are taken and principles laid down by those who concur in the same vote, which bear in opposite directions, and are brought from the most adverse points of doctrine. Yet all these persons co-operate easily enough, and no one is ever held to be responsible for all the topics and premises which may be insisted on by his neighbours.

To come, for instance, to the topic of attacks on the person of the sovereign. Many people, and I profess myself to be

one, may think such a proceeding at variance with the dictates of good taste, of dangerous example, and repugnant to good feelings; and therefore they will not themselves have recourse to it. Yet it would be difficult, I think, to deny that it is, or may be, a lawful weapon to be employed in the great and eternal contest between the court and the country. Can there be any doubt that the personal influence, and personal character, of the sovereign is an element, and a pretty important element, in the practical constitution of the Government, and always forms part of the strength or weakness of the administration he employs? In the abstract, therefore, I cannot think that attempts to weaken that influence, to abate a dangerous popularity, or even to excite odium towards a corrupt and servile ministry, by making the prince, on whose favour they depend, generally contemptible or hateful, are absolutely to be interdicted or protested against. Excesses no doubt may be committed. But the system of attacking abuses of power, by attacking the person who instigates or carries them through by general popularity or personal influence, is lawful enough I think, and may form a large scheme of Whig opposition,—not the best or the noblest part certainly, but one not without its use,—and that may on some occasions be altogether indispensable. It does not appear to me, therefore, that the degree of sanction that may be given to such attacks, by merely writing in the same journal where they occasionally appear, is to be considered as a sin against conscience or the constitution, or would be so imputed.

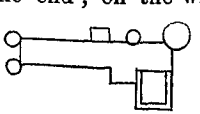
I say all this, however, only to justify my own laxity on these points, and certainly with no hope of persuading you to imitate it. With regard to the passages in last number, which you consider as a direct attack on the Whig party, I must say that it certainly did not strike me in that light when I first read it; nor can I yet persuade myself that this is its true and rational interpretation. I took it, I confess, as an attack, —not upon any regular party or connection in the state, but upon these individuals, either in party or out of it, to whose *personal* qualities it seemed directly to refer,—men such as have at all times existed, who, with honourable and patriotic sentiments, and firmness enough to resist direct corruption and intimidation, yet wanted vigour to withstand the softer pleas

of civility or friendship, and allowed their public duties to be postponed, rather than give offence or pain to individuals with whom they were connected. This, I really conceive, is the natural and obvious application of the words that are employed, and I am persuaded they will appear to the general view of readers to have no deeper meaning. Certainly they suggested no other to me; and if they had, I would undoubtedly have prevented their publication; for I should look upon such an attack as that as a violation of that fidelity to the cause of liberty, to which I think we are substantially pledged.

I wish I had ten minutes talk with you instead of all this scribble, etc.

To Francis Horner, Esq. Edinburgh, 12th March 1815.

Craigcrook, his country house, near Edinburgh.

We are trying to live at this for a few days, just to find out what scenes are pleasant, and what holes the wind blows through. I must go back to town in two or three days for two months, but in July we hope to return and finish our observations in the course of the autumn. It will be all scramble and experiment this season, for my new buildings will not be habitable till next year, and the rubbish which they occasion will be increased by endless pulling down of walls, levelling and planting of shrubs, etc. Charley wishes me to send you a description of the place, but it will be much shorter and more satisfactory to send you a drawing of it, which I shall get some of my artist friends to make out. In the meantime try to conceive an old narrow high house, eighteen feet wide and fifty long, with irregular projections of all sorts; three little staircases, turrets, and a large round tower at one end; on the whole exhibiting a ground plan like this  with multitudes of windows of all shapes and sizes, placed at the bottom of a green slope ending in a steep woody hill, which rises to the height of 300 or 400 feet on the west, and shaded with some respect-

able trees near the door,—with an old garden (or rather two, one within the other) stuck close on one side of the house, and surrounded with massive and aged stone walls fifteen feet high. The inner garden I mean to lay down chiefly in smooth grass, with clustered shrubs and ornamental trees beyond, to mask the wall, and I am busy in widening the approaches, and substituting sunk fences for the high stone walls on the lawn. My chief operation, however, consists in an additional building, which I have marked out with *double lines* on the elegant plan above, in which I shall have one excellent and very pleasant room of more than twenty-eight feet in length by eighteen in breadth, with a laundry and store-room below, and two pretty bed-chambers above. The windows of these rooms are the only ones in the whole house which will look to the hill and that sequestered and solemn view, which is the chief charm of the spot. The largest, Charlotte and I have agreed to baptise by your name, and little Charley is to be taught to call it *grandpapa's room*, as soon as she can speak. So you must come and take possession of it soon, or the poor child will get superstitious notions of you, as an invisible being. In the meantime the walls are only ten feet high, and C. and I sleep in a little dark room, not twelve feet square in the tower.

To Charles Wilkes, Esq. Craigcrook, 7th May 1815.

State of Europe.

Here I lie,
Shot by a sky-
Rocket in the eye.*

This is literally true, except that I am not dead, nor quite blind. But I have been nearly so for the last week, or I could not have neglected your very kind letter so long. I am a sad wretch of a correspondent, however, even when I have my eyesight, and deserve your kindness in no way, but by valuing and returning it.

I am mortally afraid of the war, and I think that is all I

* He had been struck, and alarmingly, by a rocket near the eye, on the 4th of June.

can say about it. I hate Bonaparte too, because he makes me more afraid than anybody else, and seems more immediately the cause of my paying income-tax, and having my friends killed with dysenteries and gun-shot wounds, and making my country unpopular, bragging, and servile, and everything that I do not wish it to be. I do think, too, that the risk was, and is, far more imminent and tremendous, of the subversion of all national independence, and all peaceful virtues, and mild and generous habits, by his insolent triumph, than by the success of the most absurd of those who are allied against him. Men will not be ripe for a reasonable or liberal government on this side of the millenium. But though old abuses are likely to be somewhat tempered by the mild measures of wealthy communities, and the diffusion of something like intelligence and education among the lower orders, I really cannot bring myself, therefore, to despise and abuse the Bourbons, and Alexander, and Francis, with the energy which you do. They are absurd, shallow, and hollow persons, I daresay. But they are not very atrocious, and never will have the power to do half so much mischief as their opponent. I prefer, upon the whole, a set of tyrants, if it must be so, that we can laugh at, and would rather mix contempt with my political dislike, than admiration or terror. You admire greatness much more than I do, and have a far more extensive taste for the *sublime* in character. So I could be in my heart for taking a hit at Bonaparte in public or in private, whenever I thought I had him at an advantage; and would even shuffle a little on the score of morality and national rights, if I could insure success in my enterprise. But I am dreadfully afraid, and do not differ from you in seeing little but disorder on either side of the picture. On the whole, however, my wishes must go to the opposite side from yours, I believe; and that chiefly from my caring more about the present, compared with the future. I really cannot console myself for the certainty of being vexed and anxious; and the chance of being very unhappy all my life, by the belief that some fifty or a hundred years after I am dead, there will be somewhat less of folly or wretchedness among the bigots of Spain, or the boors of Russia. One reads and thinks so much of past ages, and extends the scale of our combinations so far beyond the rational measure of our actual

interest in events, that it is difficult not to give way now and then to that illusion. But I laugh at myself ten times a-day for yielding to it; and have no doubt that when my days come to a close, I shall find it but a poor consolation for the sum of actual suffering I have come through.

I know you think all this damnable heresy. But I cannot see things in any other light when I look calmly upon them; and I really fancy I am a very calm observer, etc.

For God's sake get me a reviewer who can write a taking style.

To Francis Horner, Esq. Edinburgh, 9th June 1815.

Bonaparte.

As to parliamentary reform and the progress of our constitution, my opinions are already on record; and you can judge whether I am too vain in saying that I think they coincide more exactly with yours than with those of any other person with whom I have communicated. Thinking them therefore not only true, but of considerable importance, you cannot doubt that I must be extremely gratified to have them supported by the clear and temperate reasoning, and the overpowering weight of accurate knowledge, with which you could adorn them. As to Bonaparte, I have never hated him much, since he has lost his power to do mischief. I suppose I hated him before, chiefly because I feared him, and thought he might do me a mischief. But I never believed that a creature upon whom so much depended could be an ordinary man. I was struck at the first reading with the fairness of Warden's book, though it is a little shallow, scanty, and inconsistent; but I am disposed to treat a fallen sovereign with all sort of courtesy, and certainly to insult him less than when in the plenitude of his power. I like to think well of the few people one *must* think about, and should really feel obliged to any one who could make me admire or love this singular being a little more than I can even yet bring myself to do. His magnanimity and equanimity,—his talents and courage, and even his self command, I am not inclined to question. But he had a *heart*, I think, of ice and adamant; and I own I cannot bear to think that those who knew and loved *Fox*

should have any tenderness towards him. I cannot agree that he had *any* princely virtues, low as these are in the scale of ethics. He was a chief much more in the style of *Frederick* than of Henri IV.; and I must hate all the tribe. But I hate still more the poor sycophants who would deny him what he is entitled to, and should be proud myself to do him noble justice in opposition to their servile clamours.

To John Allen, Esq. Edinburgh, 20th December 1816.

On Indulgence.

By the way I wanted to let you understand a little more of my doctrine as to the bad effects of indulgence, which I think you somewhat misapprehend; but I haven't time at present, and perhaps I may take occasion to set down half a page in the Review on that subject. In the meantime I think you must see at once that those who have never been accustomed to submit to privations or inconveniences, will find it more difficult to do so when it becomes a duty, than those to whom such sacrifices have been familiar. Young people who have been habitually gratified in all their desires will not only indulge in more capricious desires, but will infallibly take it more amiss when the feelings or happiness of others require that they should be thwarted, than those who have been practically trained to the habit of subduing and restraining them, and, consequently, will in general sacrifice the happiness of others to their own selfish indulgence. To what else is the selfishness of princes and other great people to be attributed? It is in vain to think of cultivating principles of generosity and beneficence by mere exhortation and reasoning. Nothing but the *practical habit* of overcoming our own selfishness, and of familiarly encountering privations and discomfort on account of others, will ever enable us to do it when it is required. And *therefore* I am firmly persuaded that indulgence *infallibly* produces selfishness and hardness of heart, and that nothing but a pretty severe discipline and control can lay the foundation of a firm and magnanimous character, etc.

To Charles Wilkes, Esq., New York.
London, 17th February 1817.

Love of Nature.

It has long been my opinion that those who have a genuine love for nature and rural scenery, are very easily pleased, and that it is not easy to find any aspect of the sky or the earth from which they will not borrow delight. For my own part, condemned as I am to a great deal of town life, there is something delicious to me in the sound even of a biting east wind among my woods; and the sight of a clear spring bubbling from a rock, and the smell of the budding pines and the common field daisies, and the cawing of my rooks, and the cooing of my cushats, are almost enough for me—so at least I think to-day, which is a kind of parting day for them, and endears them all more than ever. Do not imagine, however, that we have nothing better, for we have now hyacinths, auriculas, and anemonies, in great glory, besides sweet briar, and wallflowers in abundance, and blue gentians and violets, and plenty of rose leaves, though no flowers yet, and apple-blossoms and sloes all around.

I am rather impatient to make a little money now, and often find myself calculating how soon, at my present rate of saving, I may venture to release myself from the drudgery of my profession, etc. I am sufficiently aware that my gains are in some degree precarious, and after all, though I please myself with views of retirement and leisure, and travelling and reading, I am by no means perfectly sure that I should be much happier in that state than my present one. Having long set my standard of human felicity at a very moderate pitch, and persuaded myself that men are *considerably* lower than the angels, I am not much given to discontent, and am sufficiently sensible that many things that appear and are irksome and vexatious, are necessary to help life along. A little more sleep, and a little more time to travel and read, I certainly should like, and be better for; but placed as I am, I must do the whole task that is appointed for me, or more. And there is some excitement and foolish vanity in doing a great deal, and coming off whole and hearty. God help us, it is a foolish little thing this human life at the best; and it is half ridiculous and half pitiful to see what importance we ascribe to it, and to its little ornaments and distinctions, etc.

To Charles Wilkes, Esq. Craigcrook House, 9th May 1818.

Chantrey and Cunningham.

I have been a good part of the morning with Chantrey, who has some beautiful things. I wished much for you while I was in his gallery. His busts and children are admirable, but I do not much like either his full statues or his designs in relief. He is a strange blunt fellow himself; and in his workshop I met another curiosity*—a Scottish poet—no contemptible imitator of Burns, who is a sort of overseer for Chantrey, and is trusted with all his business. He was bred a carpenter, but being, like most of my countrymen, well educated, he wandered up to London, and set about reporting debates for the newspapers, but, being a strict Whig, he grew so impatient of the baseness he was obliged to set down, that he came to Chantrey, who is a bit of a Whig also, and said he would rather sweep his shop for him than go on with such drudgery; and now he is his right hand man, and has invented various machines of great use and ingenuity. I shall send you a volume of his poetry, to let you see what universal geniuses come out of Scotland.

To Charles Wilkes, Esq. London, 13th April 1822.

London Society.

I hope you are sensible of the compliment I pay you in taking this vast sheet of paper, which, to make it the more gracious, I have stolen from the quire on which my host, Sir James Mackintosh, is now writing his history.

I have been very much amused in London, though rather too feverishly; so that it is deliciously refreshing to get out of its stir and tumult, and sit down to recollect all I have seen and heard, amidst the flowers' freshness and nightingales of this beautiful country. I was a good deal among wits and politicians, of whom you would not care much to hear. But I also saw a good deal of Miss Edgeworth and Tommy Moore, and something of your countryman, Washington Irving, with whom I was very happy to renew my acquaintance. Moore is still more delightful in society than he is in his writings; the sweetest-blooded, warmest-hearted,

* Allan Cunningham.

happiest, hopefulest, creature that ever set fortune at defiance. He was quite ruined about three years ago by the treachery of a deputy in a small office he held, and forced to reside in France. He came over, since I came to England, to settle his debts by the sacrifice of every farthing he had in the world, and had scarcely got to London when he found that the whole scheme of settlement had blown up, and that he must return in ten days to his exile. And yet I saw nobody so sociable, kind, and happy; so resigned, or rather so triumphant over fortune, by the buoyancy of his spirits, and the inward light of his mind. He told me a great deal about Lord Byron, with whom he had lived very much abroad, and of whose heart and temper, with all his partiality to him, he cannot say anything very favourable. There is nothing gloomy or bitter, however, in his ordinary talk, but rather a wild, rough, boyish pleasantry, much more like nature than his poetry.

Miss Edgeworth I had not seen for twenty years, and found her very unlike my recollection.

Have you any idea what sort of thing a truly elegant English woman of fashion is? I suspect not; for it is not to be seen almost out of England, and I do not know very well how to describe it. Great quietness, simplicity, and delicacy of manners, with a certain dignity and self-possession that puts vulgarity out of countenance, and keeps presumption in awe; a singularly sweet, soft, and rather low voice, with remarkable elegance and ease of diction; a perfect taste in wit and manners and conversation, but no loquacity, and rather languid spirits; a sort of indolent disdain of display and accomplishments; an air of great good nature and kindness, with but too often some heartlessness, duplicity, and ambition. These are some of the traits, and such, I think, as would most strike an American. You would think her rather cold and spiritless; but she would predominate over you in the long run; and indeed is a very bewitching and dangerous creature, more seductive and graceful than any other in the world; but not better nor happier; and I am speaking even of the very best and most perfect. We have plenty of loud foolish things, good humoured even in the highest society.

Washington Irving is rather low spirited and silent in mixed company, but is agreeable, I think, *tête à tête*, and is very gentle and amiable. He is a good deal in fashion, and has done something to deserve it. I hope you do not look on him in America as having flattered our old country improperly. I had the honour of dining twice with a royal Duke, very jovial, loud, familiar, and facetious, by no means foolish or uninstructed, but certainly coarse and indelicate to a degree quite remarkable in the upper classes of society. The most extraordinary man in England is the man in whose house I now am.

I came down here yesterday by way of Hayleybury, where I took up Malthus, who is always delightful, and brought him here with me. The two professors have gone over to the College to their lectures, and return to dinner. I proceed on my journey homewards in the evening. Would you like to know what old England is like? and in what it most differs from America? Mostly, I think, in the visible memorials of antiquity with which it is overspread; the superior beauty of its verdure, and the more tasteful and happy state and distribution of its woods. Every thing around you here is *historical*, and leads to romantic or interesting recollections. Grey grown church towers, cathedrals, ruined abbeys, castles of all sizes and descriptions, in all stages of decay, from those that are inhabited to those in whose moats ancient trees are growing, and ivy mantling over their mouldered fragments. Within sight of this house, for instance, there are the remains of the palace of Hunsden, where Queen Elizabeth passed her childhood, and Theobalds, where King James had his hunting seat, and the *Rye-house* where Rumbald's plot was laid, and which is still occupied by a maltster—such is the permanency of habits and professions in this ancient country. Then there are two gigantic oak stumps, with a few fresh branches still, which are said to have been planted by Edward the III., and massive stone bridges over lazy waters; and churches that look as old as Christianity; and beautiful groups of branchy trees; and a verdure like nothing else in the universe; and all the cottages and lawns fragrant with sweet briar and violets, and glowing with purple lilacs, and white elders; and antique villages scattering round wide bright greens; with old trees

and ponds, and a massive pair of oaken stocks preserved from the days of Alfred. With you everything is new, and glaring, and angular, and withal rather frail, slight, and perishable; nothing soft and mellow and venerable, or that looks as if it would ever become so. I will not tell you about Scotland after this. It has not these characters of ancient wealth and population, but beauties of another kind which you must come and see.

To Mrs. Colden, New York. (A sister of Mrs. Jeffrey.)
Mardocks, 6th May 1822.

Winter Travelling.

Here we are on our way to you; toiling up through snow and darkness, with this shattered carcase and this reluctant and half-desponding spirit. You know how I hate early rising; and here have I been for three days up two hours before the sun, and, blinking before a dull taper, haggling at my inflamed beard before a little pimping inn looking-glass, and abstaining from suicide only from a deep sense of religion and love to my country. To-night it snows and blows, and there is good hope of our being blocked up at Witham Corner, or Alconbury Hill, or some of these lonely retreats, for a week or so, or fairly stuck in the drift, and obliged to wade our way to some such hovel as received poor Lear and his fool in some such season. Oh dear dear! But in the meantime we are sipping weak black tea by the side of a tolerable fire, and are in hopes of reaching the liberties of Westminster before dark on Wednesday. We have secured lodgings, I believe, at 37 Jermyn Street, where, if you could have the great kindness to present yourself any time after four on Thursday, you would diffuse more joy over an innocent and exiled family than they have any of them tasted since they were driven from their fatherland. This is all the purpose of my writing, and I am too sleepy, or tired at least, to say any more.

To Mr. Empson. Grantham, Monday evening,
31st January 1831.

On his Election.

I was duly elected at Malton yesterday. I got there on Tuesday at one o'clock; and, attended by twelve forward disciples, instantly set forth to call on my 700 electors, and solicit the honour of their votes. In three hours and a half I actually called at 635 doors, and shook 494 men by the hand. Next day the streets were filled with bands of music, and flags, and streamers of all descriptions; in the midst of which I was helped up, about eleven o'clock, to the dorsal ridge of a tall prancing steed, decorated with orange ribbons, having my reins and stirrups held by men in the borough liveries, and a long range of flags and music moving around me. In this state I paraded through all the streets at a foot pace, stopping at every turning to receive three huzzahs, and to bow to all the women in the windows. At twelve I was safely deposited in the market-place, at the foot of a square-built scaffold, packed quite full of people; and after some dull ceremonies, was declared duly elected, by a show of hands, and fervent acclamations. After which I addressed the multitude, amounting, they say, to near 5000 persons, in very eloquent and touching terms; and was then received into a magnificent high-backed chair, covered with orange silk, and gay with flags and streamers, on which I was borne on the shoulders of six electors, nodding majestically through all the streets and streetlings; and at length returned, safe and glorious, to my inn. At five o'clock I had to entertain about 120 of the more respectable of my constituents, and to make divers speeches till near eleven o'clock; having, in the meantime, sallied out at the head of twenty friends, to visit another party of nearly the same magnitude, who were regaling in an inferior inn, and whom we found in a state of far greater exaltation. All the Cayleys, male and female, were kind enough to come in and support me; and about eleven, I contrived to get away, with Sir George and his son-in-law, and came out here with a great cavalcade about midnight. The thing is thought to have gone off brilliantly. What it has cost I do not know; but the accounts are to be settled by Lord Milton's agent, and sent to me to London.

The place from which I write belongs to a Mr. Worsley, a

man of large fortune, who has married one of Sir George Cayley's daughters, and has assembled their whole genealogy in his capacious mansion. You know I always took greatly to the family, and I like them if possible better the more I see of them in their family circle. The youngest, who is about sixteen, and I have long avowed a mutual flame; and the second, who is to be married next month, is nearly a perfect beauty. But it is the sweet blood, and the naturalness and gaiety of heart which I chiefly admire in them; and after my lonely journey, and tiresome election, the delight of roaming about these vernal valleys, in the idleness of a long sunny day, in the midst of their bright smiles and happy laughs, reconciles me to existence again. It is a strange huge house, built about eighty years ago, on a sort of Italian model, and full of old pictures and books, and cabinets full of gimcracks, and portfolios crammed with antique original sketches and engravings, and closets full of old plate and dusty china, which would give Thomson and you, and Johnny Clerk in his better days, work enough for a month, though I, who have only a day to spare, prefer talking with living creatures. This is all very childish and foolish, I confess, for a careful senator, at a great national crisis. But I have really been so hard worked and bothered of late, that you must excuse me if I enjoy one day of relaxation. I go off to-morrow at six o'clock, etc.

To H. Cockburn, Esq. (afterwards Lord Cockburn).
7th April 1831.

On the Exertions Attending an Ambitious Life.

A thousand thanks for your kind and amiable letter. It breathes the very spirit of happiness—and of all that deserves happiness; and I rejoice in it, and try not to envy it. It is very soothing to me to think of you at Craigcrook, and that you will be happy there. But you are happy everywhere, and make all places happy to which you come. Would to Heaven I were with you, among the roses and the beeches. After all, why should I not be there? I have money enough nearly to live there in independent idleness (at least with the help of your domestic economy), and the world would go on

about as well, I daresay, although I passed my days in reading and gardening, and my nights in unbroken slumbers. Why, then, should I vex my worn and shattered frame with toils and efforts, and disturb the last sands in my hour-glass with the shaking of a foolish ambition! Why indeed! Why does nobody do what is most conducive to their happiness? Or, rather, why are we all framed and moulded into such artificial creatures as to require the excitement of habitual exertions, and the dream of ideal importance, and the strong exercise of hard work, to keep us out of ennui and despondency, and a stealing torpor and depressing feeling of insignificance? It is something of this kind with all of us, and we magnify it into a notion of duty, and a pretence of being useful in our generation! I think I shall break loose one day very soon from these trammels, and live the life of nature and reason after all. It is a bad experiment, I know, at those years. But if my health stand the change, I am pretty sure that my spirits would. Only I must get through this job first. And then, I suppose, I shall discover that I must make up my losses by a year or two's hard work at the bar, and then that it will be a duty to the public to go on the bench when I begin to fall into dotage, and to my family, to expose myself and shorten my life by ridiculous exertions.

There is a sermon for you! Heaven knows what has led me into it; for I only meant to thank you, and to say that you may do what you like with my picture (and the original!), etc.

To Mrs. Laing, widow of Malcolm Laing, Esq., Historian of Scotland. London, 8th July 1831.

On Hastings.

We came to Seven Oaks on Friday, and walked all over the magnificent domains of Knowle next morning,—a house begun in King John's time, and finished in Elizabeth's, and with finishing and furnishing very entire of both eras. In the evening we came to Tunbridge Wells, where we staid till yesterday, in the loveliest weather, and came down here yesterday, in something of a fog; and here we are in a new hotel, so close to the sea that you may spit into it from the

windows, which is a great convenience, and with boats and sloops sleeping about in the bay, or hauled up on the pebbles, for they have no quay or harbour of any sort, but merely pull up pretty large vessels with a windlass and leave them, heaving and scattered about like wrecked things in a most wild and disorderly manner. People live, too, all night in these grounded hulks, and the lights in them after dark have a curious effect from our windows. This is a very curious and picturesque town, partly very old, and partly very new. The coast is chiefly, like Dover, a range of bare perpendicular sandstone rock, at least 200 feet high, generally quite close to the beach, with occasional narrow green ravines between. Into one of the largest of these the old town is packed, and spreads its wings of tall narrow houses along part of the cliffs on both sides, with only a little esplanade between them and the surf, and with their backs within 50 feet of the bare overtopping rock behind. The new buildings are a little way off, where the cliffs recede, and room has been made in many places by cutting them back. ' Very gay showy places they are—almost as fine as the Regent's Park Terraces in London, and stuck up on terraces, too, in some places. The buildings stretch near half-a-mile, and were begun within these seven years. There are bits of a good old Norman castle on the cliff, and magnificent downs, marked with Roman and British camps, along the heights, with the greenest grass, and the whitest sheep to eat it, that you ever set eyes on ; add a long row of martello towers looking massive and black along the white sands towards Beachyhead, and you have an exact landscape of the channel.

To Lord Cockburn. Hastings, 25th April 1832.

On the Roman Remains at Silchester.

The load of London and Parliament is at last lifted from my life, and I have had two days of natural existence. We got here about dark on Saturday. I drank too much coffee, and slept ill; lounged about with Jane* all yesterday, hallowing our Sabbath day with quietness ; and to-day I have driven in an open carriage, and ridden upon a pony, like any rustic squire, for near five hours together; and have been to

* Mrs. Pennington.

see *Silchester*, the largest and loftiest Roman work above ground in Great Britain. There is a wall of more than a mile in length, and varying from twenty to seven or eight feet in height, all overhung with trees and ivy, and rough with masses of flint and strange lumps of rude stones. It enclosed either a Roman town or a great castrum stativum; and there is a small amphitheatre in one corner, with the arena still quite flat, but the sloping sides completely grown up with mud. The whole stands upon a high lonely part of the country, with only a rude low church and a single farm-house in the neighbourhood, but commanding a most lovely, and almost boundless view over woody plains and blue skyey ridges on all sides of it. It is about the most striking thing I ever saw; and the effect of that grand stretch of shaded wall, with all its antique roughness and overhanging wood, lighted by a low autumnal sun, and the sheep and cattle feeding in the green solitude at its feet, made a picture not soon to be forgotten, etc.

To Lord Cockburn, Malshanger, 26th August 1833.

Shakspere.

Without professing to be a convert to all your opinions, I can safely say that I have been very much struck with the spirit and originality of the whole performance; and greatly delighted, both with your feeling and eloquent exposition of the merits of our great dramatist, and the acute and discriminating analysis you have often so happily made of his means of pleasing. If I am not always satisfied with your logic, your rhetoric almost invariably excites my admiration; and I cannot tell you how much I am gratified by finding another of the younger brethren of our profession so fairly in the way of illustrating it by his literary distinction. With your permission, I shall request my friend Mr. Moir * to give me the pleasure of an introduction to your personal acquaintance; when I hope we shall have some pleasing talk about Shakspere and his contemporaries. You will find me, I think, nearly as great an idolator of his genius as yourself; but rather an unbeliever in the possibility of detecting his compositions by

* George Moir, Esq., Advocate.

internal evidence. I am inclined, too, to rank Fletcher considerably higher than you seem to do; and think the scene between the captive knights in the second act, which you admit to be all his, by far the finest in the whole play. I think you are quite right, however, in placing Shakspere immeasurably above him in *intellectual* vigour especially, even more than in high passion or burning fancy. The great want of Fletcher is want of common sense; the most miraculous gift of Shakspere, his deep, sound, practical, universal knowledge of human nature, in all ranks, conditions and fortunes. Yet in their merely pleasing and poetical passages, and in respect to their *taste* in composition, I think they are astonishingly alike, and very much on a level. I do not see why Fletcher might not have written all the serious parts of the Winter's Tale; the first scenes of the king's jealousy especially, and those of the sheep-shearing festival, beautiful as they are; and I am sure, if you should make this the thesis of another critical epistle, you could make out quite as good a case for it as you have done for that of your actual election. Autolycus, I admit, is above his pitch; because he has too much sense and shrewdness. Shakspere has the higher tragic passions in far more perfection; but, in pity and mere tenderness, I venture to think Fletcher quite his equal. Do but look to some passages of the Page in Philaster, some of Aspatia in the Maid's Tragedy, and, above all, to the death of that noble boy in Bonduca, which I have always thought, or rather felt, to be the most pathetic passage in English poetry. I must not indulge, however, any farther in this vein; though it may satisfy you that I take a hearty interest in the subject you have chosen for your debût.

To the late Professor Spalding.* 24 Moray Place,
23d May 1836.

The Course of Weak Governments.

Macaulay seems to have got charmingly through his estimates. It is in things like these—the *whole business* of governments in quiet times—that the Government is strong.

* Mr. Spalding, then a candidate for the Logic chair in Edinburgh, had sent Lord Jeffrey a copy of his able and interesting "Letter on Shakspere's authorship of the Two Noble Kinsmen."

It is weak because there have been great constitutional, almost organic *changes;* and effected, not through overwhelming and paralyzing *force,* but by conflict of *opinions*—in which there is now partly a revulsion, partly a revival, and chiefly a gradual and growing splitting and hiving off of sections and shades, which were blended at first as against a common enemy. Do not you see that this is the course of all weak governments; first the destruction of old unquestioned authority by just and successful resistance; and then the divisions which necessarily ensue among the different parties into which the conquerors naturally array themselves—each in a great degree ignorant of its own actual following in the body, and usually overrating it. So it has ever been, since the feuds among the successors of Alexander or Charlemagne, down to those among the conquerors of Louis Seize—or the earlier dissensions among the survivors of our majestic Cromwell. The former had room and verge enough to betake themselves to separate *regions.* In our narrower confines we had to fight it out at home—and in many a doubtful conflict—till main force and fear brought about a strong government again; and stupidity and want of interest and intellect restored for about eighty years the old *habit* of submission to authority. We are out of that now over all free Europe, and are once more in the sphere of weak governments,—that is, weak for carrying or resisting any speculative or theoretical changes, or for repressing the vexatious cross play of intractable sects and *cliques;* but strong for maintaining clear rights and demolishing established abuses;—governments which *must* be creditably administered and always growing better, and under which all who are not too impatient or crazily in love with their own nostrums may live in peace and hope. You understand?

To Mr. Empson. Edinburgh, 15th.

On Arran.

In this fortunate island we know nothing of the wicked doings of the busy world which you still inhabit; and, except through a stale newspaper, hear nothing of what is agitating the mainland of Great Britain and Ireland. In fine

weather I take very kindly to this innocent and primitive state of ignorance of good and evil, and reason and muse by the quiet waters and lonely valleys, in a very voluptuous and exemplary way. But in a rainy day like this, I feel my poetical soul subside, and cannot resist a recurrence to interests which ought not to be so powerful with a grave judge or contemplative philosopher. I must even confess that at such times those dignified characters lose a little of their majesty in my eyes, and that I feel as if it were something *womanish* to sit safe and idle here in a corner, when all who have men's hearts in their bosoms are up and doing. It mortifies me a little to find that there is a closer alliance between gowns and peticoats than I had imagined, and then I think that the curiosity with which I am devoured in these woods is another feminine trait which does me no honour.

Well, but you want to hear how we like Arran, and what sort of life we lead here. On the whole, it has been very pleasant. Delicious weather, grand mountain views, wild rocky valleys, the brightest of bright waters—both fresh and salt; and here at Brodick a graceful crescent-shaped bay of a mile over, with the old castle peering over its woods at one point, and a noble black cliff at the other; and then, beyond the bright gravel of the beach, a sweet deep-green valley, glittering with streams, and tufted all over with groups of waving ash trees, winding away for two miles or more among the roots of the mountains, some of which soar up in bare peaks of grey granite, and others show their detached sides and ends—all seamed with dark gullies stretching down from their notched and jagged summits. There is a description for you, and quite true notwithstanding. And we have attended two preachings in the open air (worth ten of your idolatrous masses), and heard the voice of psalms rise softly in the calm air from a scattery group of plaided and snooded worshippers, and go echoing up among the hills, and down to the answering murmurs of the shore; and I have subscribed £10 to build a new church on the beautiful spot where this congregation met under the canopy of Heaven. As for our hostel, the people are simple and obliging, and we have nice whitings, and occasional salmon, and tough fowls, and good whisky, and bad wine. But the worst is, that a fat woman had engaged the

best rooms before we came, and one of the supreme judges of the land has actually been condemned to sleep, with his lawful wife, for the last ten days, in a little sultry garret, where it is impossible to stand upright, except in the centre, or to point your toes up when you lie down, for the low slanting roof, which comes rushing down on them. But we are not difficult, or *prideful* you know, and have really suffered no serious discomfort. To me, indeed, the homeliness of the whole scene brings back recollections of a touching and endearing sort; and when I lay down the first night, and saw the moon shining in through the little uncurtained sliding windows in the roof, on the sort of horse rug on the floor, and the naked white walls, and two straw chairs, it brought so freshly to my mind the many similar apartments I had occupied with delight in the lonely wanderings of my school and college days, that I felt all my young enthusiasm revive, and forgot judgeship and politics, and gave myself up to my long cherished dreams of poetry and love. God help us. But we leave this enchanted island on Monday morning at five o'clock, alas! and, if we survive that horror, expect to get to Craigcrook that evening; so write west to Edinburgh.

To Mrs. C. Innes. Brodick, Arran, 29th August 1837.

On Burns.

Postremum hunc Arethusa!

We go to Edinburgh to-morrow, and I shall indite no more to you this year from rustic towers and coloured woods. They have been very lonely and tranquil all day, and with no more sadness than becomes parting lovers; and now there is a glorious full moon, looking from the brightest pale sea-green sky you ever saw in your life. I was peevish, I think, when I wrote last to you; and I fancy you think so too, since you have taken no notice of me since. But I have been long out of that mood, so you need not resent it any longer, and I really do not require any castigation for my amendment, for it is not a common mood of *my* mind, and shall not come back soon. I do not quite like this move, though I believe my chief repugnance is to the early rising which awaits me, and for which I have been training myself for the last fortnight by

regularly remaining in bed till after ten o clock. You cannot think with what a pious longing I shall now look forward to Sundays. In the last week I have read all *Burn's* life and works—not without many tears, for the life especially. What touches me most is the pitiable poverty in which that gifted being (and, his noble-minded father) passed his early days—the painful frugality to which their innocence was doomed, and the thought, how small a share of the useless luxuries in which *we* (such comparatively poor creatures) indulge, would have sufficed to shed joy and cheerfulness in their dwellings, and perhaps to have saved that glorious spirit from the trials and temptations under which he fell so prematurely. Oh my dear Empson, there must be something *terribly* wrong in the present arrangements of the universe, when those things can happen, and be thought natural. I could lie down in the dirt, and cry and grovel there, I think, for a century, to save such a soul as Burns from the suffering and the contamination and the *degradation* which these same arrangements imposed upon him; and I fancy that, if I could but have known him, in my present state of wealth and influence, I might have saved, and reclaimed, and preserved him, even to the present day. He would not have been so old as my brother judge, Lord Glenlee, or Lord Lynedoch, or a dozen others that one meets daily in society. And what a creature, not only in genius, but in nobleness of character, potentially at least, if right models had been put *gently* before him. But we must not dwell on it. You south Saxons cannot value him rightly, and miss half the pathos, and more than half the sweetness. There is no such mistake as that your chief miss is in the *humour* or the shrewd sense. It is in far higher and more delicate elements—God help you! We shall be up to the whole, I trust, in another world. When I think of *his* position, I have no feeling for the *ideal* poverty of your Wordswŏrths and Coleridges; comfortable, flattered, very spoiled, capricious, idle beings, fantastically discontented because they cannot make an easy tour to Italy, and buy casts and cameos; and what poor, peddling, whining drivellers in comparison with him! But I will have no uncharity. They, too, should have been richer.

To Mr. Empson. Craigcrook, 11th November 1837.

Democracy.

I should like to be in town now in these chopping and changing times. Our pilot made an ugly yaw on first leaving his moorings; and, with tide and time of his own choosing, fairly ran on a reef before he was well under weigh. This lift of the wave among the *pensions* seems, however, to have floated him off again; and we are now in smooth water, I hope, without much more danger than a bit of our false keel or so torn off. Still it was an awkward accident, and abates one's confidence considerably as to any foul weather that may be brewing for us. Do write me what is expected. I fear the "fierce democraty" of our constitution is now to be separated from its more emollient ingredients—and presented in pure extract—as embodying its whole virtue. I have no such faith in Dr. Wakley as to taste a bit of it upon his recommendation. But I am afraid many will be rash enough to make the experiment; and who can answer for the danger? I wish somebody would write a good paper on the nature and degree of *authority* which is requisite for anything like a permanent government, and upon the plain danger of doing what might be right for a *perfectly instructed* society, for one just enough instructed to think itself fit for anything. I am myself inclined to doubt, I own, whether any degree of instruction would make it safe to give equal political power to the large poor classes of a fully peopled country as to the smaller and more wealthy; though the experience of America might encourage one as to this, if there were only a little more poverty, and a little more press of population, to test the experiment. But we shall see. With us the change could not be peaceable, and I do not think could be made at all; the chances being that we should pass at once from civil war to a canting military despotism.

To Mr. Empson. Edinburgh, 26th November 1837.

Pros and Cons of Public Life.

I return Macaulay's.*

. . . . . .

It is a very striking and interesting letter; and certainly puts

* A letter from Mr. Macaulay (afterwards Lord Macaulay), stating reasons for preferring a literary to a political life.

the *pros* and *cons* as to public life in a powerful way for the latter. But, after all, will either human motives or human duties ever bear such a dissection? and should we not all become Hownynyms or Quakers, and selfish cowardly fellows, if we were to act on views so systematic? Who the devil would ever have anything to do with love or war, nay, who would venture himself on the sea, or on a galloping horse, if he were to calculate in this way, the chances of shortening life or forfeiting comfort by such venturesome doings? And is there not a vocation in the gifts which fit us for particular stations to which it is a duty to listen? Addison and Gibbon did well to write, because they *could* not speak in public. But is that any rule for M.? And then as to the tranquillity of an author's life, I confess I have no sort of faith in it, and am sure that as eloquent a picture might be drawn of its cares, and fears and mortifications, its feverish anxieties, humiliating rivalries and jealousies, and heart-sinking exhaustion, as he has set before us of a statesman. And as to fame, if an author's is now and then more lasting, it is generally longer withheld, and, except in a few rare cases, it is of a less pervading or elevating description. A great poet, or great *original* writer, is above all other glory. But who would give much for such a glory as Gibbon's? Besides, I believe it is in the inward glow and pride of consciously influencing the great destinies of mankind, much more than in the sense of personal reputation, that the delight of either poet or statesman chiefly consists. Shakspere plainly cared nothing about his glory, and Milton referred it to other ages. And, after all, why not be *both* statesmen and authors, like Burke and Clarendon? I do not know why I write all this, for I really am very busy, and it is such idle talking.

To Mr. Empson. Edinburgh, 19th December 1837.

On the Reading of Shakspere.

I forgot to applaud your purpose of entering on that best study. But I do not believe you could ever doubt that I would applaud it. Oh yes! read, and read, in those Scriptures, as often, as largely and *as carefully*, as you can; only take care not to surfeit yourself, by taking too much sweet at

a time; and, still more, beware of stupifying yourself by poring and plodding in search of a profound meaning, which you fear you may not have seen, or a latent beauty which you fancy may have escaped you. There are no such hidden mysteries in Shakspere. He is level to all capacities, and "speaks with every tongue, to every purpose." The diction, which is mostly that of his age, may occasionally perplex those who are not familiar with it at first. But that is soon got over, and then you have only to give him and yourself *fair play*, by reading when you are in the right mood, and that with reasonable attention, which one who likes flowers and fine scenery will always give to such things when they are around his path, instead of hurrying on inobservant to the journey's end. It is of some consequence, perhaps, if you are really to go through the whole series of plays (which I earnestly recommend), to know with which you had best begin. But I am not sure that I know enough of your tastes, and probable repugnances, to be able to advise you.

The single play which has more of the prodigality of high fancy, united with infinite discrimination of character, and moral wisdom and pathos, than any other, is *Hamlet*. But then it has so much of what is wayward and unaccountable, that, if you are apt to be perplexed with such things, you might probably do best to begin with *Othello*, which, with less exuberance and variety, is full of deep feeling, force, and dignity; and all perfectly consistent, smooth, and intelligible. And then take *Macbeth*, which, in spite of its witches and goblins, has the same recommendation of not startling you with strangeness and wild fancies, but keeps the solemn tenor of its way, right on to the grand conclusion. For the *comedies*, the two Parts of *Henry IV.* and the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, are about the best; though *As You Like It* is more airy, graceful, and elegant, and, to my taste, though less powerful and inventive, on the whole more agreeable. But now, if you rejoice in the sweet diction and delicate fancies of the truly poetical parts of these plays, you may proceed to the more ethereal revelations of the *Tempest* and the *Midsummer's Dream*, and all the bright magic of *Ariel* and *Titania*. And what things these are! and how they have illumined and perfumed our lower world, by the play of their sweet immortality, and the

wafture of their shining wings! Then that best romance of youth and love—*Romeo and Juliet*—and the gracious Idyll of *Perdita*, and the great sea of tears poured out in *Lear*, and the sweet austere composure and purity of Isabella in *Measure for Measure*, and the sublime misanthropy of *Timon*; and—but there is no end to this—and those are the best of them. Only I must say a word for the glorious and gorgeous abandonment of *Antony and Cleopatra*, through the whole of which you breathe an atmosphere of intoxication and heroic voluptuousness; and the gentle majesty of *Brutus* and his *Portia* in contrast with the stern and noble pride and indignation of *Coriolanus*. There, now, you see what it is to set me off upon Shakspere! But it is to set you on him, and that must be my apology; besides that I could not help it. To end my lecture, I will only say, do not read too fast. Two days to one play will not be too much; and look back to them again as often as you please. And do not read every day, unless you have a call that way. And so God prosper your pleasant studies, and bless them for your good.

To Mrs. C. Innes. Edinburgh, 6th February 1840.

Dickens' American Notes.

A thousand thanks to you for your charming book! and for all the pleasure, profit, and *relief* it has afforded me. You *have* been very tender to our sensitive friends beyond sea, and really said nothing which should give any serious offence to any moderately rational patriot among them. The *Slavers*, of course, will give you no quarter, and I suppose you did not expect they should. But I do not think you could have said less, and my whole heart goes along with every word you have written. Some people will be angry too, that you have been so strict to observe their *spitting*, and neglect of ablutions, etc. And more, that you should have spoken with so little reverence of their courts of law and state legislature, and even of their grand Congress itself. But all this latter part is done in such a spirit of good-humoured playfulness, and so mixed up with clear intimations, that you have quite as little veneration for things of the same sort *at home*, that it will not be easy to represent it as the fruit of *English* insolence and envy.

As to the rest, I think you have perfectly accomplished all that you profess or undertake to do; and that the world has never yet seen a more faithful, graphic, amusing, kind-hearted narrative than you have now bestowed on it. Always graceful and lively, and sparkling and indulgent, and yet relieved, or rather (in the *French* sense of the word) *exalted* by so many suggestions of deep thought, and so many touches of tender and generous sympathy (caught at once, and recognised like the signs of free masonry, by all whose hearts have been instructed in these mysteries), that it must be our own faults if we are not as much improved as delighted by the perusal. Your account of the silent or solitary imprisonment system is as pathetic and powerful a piece of writing as I have ever seen; and your sweet airy little snatch of the happy little woman, taking her new babe home to her young husband, and your manly and feeling appeal in behalf of the poor Irish (or rather of the affectionate poor of all races and tongues), who are patient and tender to their children, under circumstances which would make half the exemplary parents among the rich monsters of selfishness and discontent, remind us that we have still among us the creator of Nelly, and Smike, and the schoolmaster, and his dying pupil, etc.; and must continue to win for you still more of that homage of the heart, that love and esteem of the just and the good, which, though it *should* never be disjoined from them, I think you must already feel to be better than fortune or fame.

Well, I have no doubt your 3000 copies will be sold in a week, and I hope you will tell me that they have put £1000 at least into your pocket. Many people will say that the work is a slight one, and say it perhaps truly. But every body will read it; and read it with pleasure to themselves, and growing regard for the author. More—and perhaps with *better* reason, for I am myself in the number—will think there is rather too much of Laura Bridgman and penitentiaries, etc., in general. But that, I believe, is chiefly because we grudge being so long parted from the personal presence of our entertainer as we are by these interludes, and therefore we hope to be forgiven by him.

And so God bless you; and prosper you in all your undertakings, etc. etc.

To Charles Dickens, Esq. Craigcrook, 16th October 1842.

Dickens' Christmas Carol, etc.

Blessings on your kind heart, my dear Dickens! and may it always be as light and full as it is kind, and a fountain of kindness to all within reach of its beatings! We are all charmed with your Carol, chiefly, I think, for the genuine *goodness* which breathes all through it, and is the true inspiring angel by which its genius has been awakened. The whole scene of the Cratchetts is like the dream of a beneficent angel in spite of its broad reality, and little *Tiny Tim*, in life and death almost as sweet and as touching as Nelly. And then the schoolday scene, with that large-hearted delicate sister, and her true inheritor, with his gall-lacking liver, and milk of human kindness for blood, and yet all so natural, and so humbly and serenely happy! Well, you should be happy yourself, for you may be sure you have done more good, and not only fastened more kindly feelings, but prompted more positive acts of beneficence, by this little publication, than can be traced to all the pulpits and confessionals in Christendom, since Christmas 1842.

And is not this better than caricaturing American knaveries, or lavishing your great gifts of fancy and observation on Pecksniffs, Dodgers, Bailleys, and Moulds. Nor is this a mere crotchet of mine, for nine-tenths of your readers, I am convinced, are of the same opinion; and accordingly, I prophecy that you will sell three times as many of this moral and pathetic Carol as of your grotesque and fantastical Chuzzlewits.

I hope you have not fancied that I think less frequently of you, or love you less, because I have not lately written to you. Indeed, it is not so; but I have been poorly in health for the last five months, and advancing age makes me lazy and perhaps forgetful. But I do not forget my benefactors, and I owe too much to you not to have you constantly in my thoughts. I scarcely know a single individual to whom I am indebted for so much pleasure, and the means at least of being made better. I wish you had not made such an onslaught on the Americans. Even if it were all merited, it does mischief, and no good. Besides, you know that there are many exceptions; and if ten righteous might have saved a city

once, there are surely innocent and amiable men and women, and besides boys and girls, enough in that vast region, to arrest the proscription of a nation. I cannot but hope therefore, that you will relent before you have done with them, and contrast your deep shadings with some redeeming touches. God bless you. I must not say more to-day.

To Charles Dickens, Esq. Edinburgh, 26th December 1843.

Martin Chuzzlewit.

In *the second* place, thanks for your kind letter. But, *imprimis*, still warmer thanks for your two charming chapters of Tom Pinch, which are in the old and true vein, which no man but yourself either knows where to look for, or how to work, after it has been laid open to all the world, etc.

It is not *that* at all I wish to say to you. No, no; it is about that most flattering wish, or, more probably, passing fancy, of that dear Kate * of yours, to associate my name with yours over the baptismal font of your new-come boy. My first impression was, that it was a mere piece of kind badinage of hers (or perhaps your own), and not meant to be seriously taken, and consequently that it would be foolish to take any notice of it. But it has since occurred to me, that, if you had really meditated so great an honour for me, you would naturally think it strange, if I did not in some way acknowledge it, and express the deep sense I should certainly have of such an act of kindness. And so I write now, to say, in all fulness and simplicity of heart, that, if such a thing is indeed in your contemplation, it would be more flattering and agreeable to me than most things that have befallen me in this mortal pilgrimage; while, if it was but the sportful expression of a happy and confiding playfulness, I shall still feel grateful for the communication, and return you a smile as cordial as your own, and with full permission to both of you to smile at the simplicity which could not distinguish jest from earnest. And such being the object of the missive, I shall not plague you with any smaller matters for the present; only I shall not be satisfied, if the profits of the Carol do not ultimately come up to my estimate, etc.

Mrs. Dickens.

I want amazingly to see you rich, and independent of all irksome exertions; and really, if you go on having more boys (and naming them after poor Scotch plebeians), you must make good bargains and lucky hits, and, above all, accommodate yourself oftener to that deeper and higher tone of human feeling, which, *you now see experimentally*, is more surely and steadily popular than any display of fancy, or magical power of observation and description combined. And so God be with you, etc.

To Charles Dickens, Esq. Edinburgh, 1st February 1844.

Dickens' "Chime."

Blessings on your kind heart, my dearest Dickens! for *that*, after all, is your great talisman, and the gift for which you will be not only most loved, but longest remembered. Your kind and courageous advocacy of the rights of the poor—your generous assertion, and touching displays, of their virtues, and the delicacy as well as the warmth of their affections, have done more to soothe desponding worth—to waken sleeping (almost dead) humanities—and to shame even selfish brutality, than all the other writings of the age, and make it, and all that are to come after, your debtors.

Well, you understand from this (though it was all true before) that the music of your chimes had reached me, and resounded through my heart, and that I thank you with all that is left of it.

I think I need not say that I have been charmed with them, or even after what fashion, or by what notes principally. You know me well enough to make that out without prompting. But I could not *reserve* my tears for your third part. From the meeting with Will on the street, they flowed and ebbed at your bidding; and I know you will forgive me for saying that my interest in the story *began* there. Your opening chorus of the church-going wind is full of poetry and painting, and the meeting of Trotty and Meg very sweet and graceful." But I do not care about your Alderman and his twaddling friends, and think their long prosing in the street dull and unnatural. But after Will and Lillian come on the scene, it is all delicious, every bit of it—the vision as well as the reality; and the stern

and terrible pictures of (the visionary) Will and the child, as well as the angel sweetness of Meg, and the expiating agony of poor Lillian. The delicacy with which *her* story is left mostly in shadow, and the thrilling pathos of both her dialogues with Meg, are beyond the reach of any pen but your own, and *it* never did anything better. And yet I have felt the pathos of those parts, and indeed throughout, almost painfully oppressive. Sanative, I daresay, to the spirit, but making us despise and loathe ourselves for passing our days in luxury, while better and gentler creatures are living such lives as makes us wonder that such things can be in a society of human beings, or even in the world of a good God.

Your Bell spirits, and all the secrets of their race, is a fine German extravaganza, and shows that if you did not prefer "stooping to truth, and moralising your song," you could easily beat all the Teutonic mystics and ghost seers to sticks at their own weapons. It is a better contrived, and far more richly adorned, machinery than the Christmas incarnations that exorcised the demon of ————, though, by the way, there is less poetical justice in frightening poor innocent Trotty with such a tissue of horrors as might be requisite to soften the stony heart of the miser.

To Mr. Dickens. Edinburgh, 12th December 1844.

Dombey and Son.

Oh, my dear dear Dickens! what a No. 5 you have now given us! I have so cried and sobbed over it last night, and again this morning; and felt my heart purified by those tears, and blessed and loved you for making me shed them; and I never can bless and love you enough. Since that divine Nelly was found dead on her humble couch, beneath the snow and the ivy, there has been nothing like the actual dying of that sweet Paul, in the summer sunshine of that lofty room. And the long vista that leads us so gently and sadly, and yet so gracefully and winningly, to that plain consummation! Every trait so true and so touching—and yet lightened by that fearless innocence which goes *playfully* to the brink of the grave, and that pure affection which bears the unstained spirit, on its soft and lambent flash, at once to its source in eternity.

In reading of these delightful children, how deeply do we feel that "of such is the kingdom of Heaven;" and how ashamed of the contaminations which *our* manhood has received from the contact of earth, and wonder how *you* should have been admitted into that pure communion, and so "presumed an earthly guest, and drawn Empyrial air," though for our benefit and instruction. Well, I did not mean to say all this; but this I must say, and you will believe it, that of the many thousand hearts that will melt and swell over these pages, there can be few that will feel their chain so deeply as mine, and scarcely any so *gratefully*. But after reaching this climax in the fifth number, what are you to do with the fifteen that are to follow? —"The wine of life is drawn, and nothing left but the dull dregs for this poor world to brag of." So I should say, and fear for any other adventurer. But I have unbounded trust in your resources, though I have a feeling that you will have nothing in the sequel, if indeed in your whole life, equal to the pathos and poetry, the truth and the tenderness, of the four last pages of this number, for those, at least, who feel and judge like me. I am most anxious and impatient, however, to see how you get on, and begin already to conceive how you may fulfil your formerly incredible prediction, that I should come to take an interest in Dombey himself. Now, that you have got his stony heart into the terrible crucible of affliction, though I still retain my incredulity as to Miss Tox and the Major, I feel that I (as well as they) am but clay in the hands of the potter, and may be moulded at your will. It is not worth while, perhaps, to go back to the Battle of Life; but I wish to say that, on reading it a second time, I was so charmed with the sweet writing and generous sentiments, as *partly* to forget the faults of the story, and to feel that if you had had time and space enough to develope and bring out your conception, you must probably have disarmed most of your censors. But the general voice, I fancy, persists in refusing it a place among your best pieces. This Dombey, however, will set all right, and make even the envious and jealous ashamed of saying anything against you.

How funny that *besoin* of yours for midnight rambling in city streets, and how curious that Macaulay should have the same taste or fancy. If I thought there was any such inspira-

tion as yours to be caught by the practice, I should expose my poor irritable *trachea*, I think, to a nocturnal pilgrimage without scruple. But I fear I should have my venture for my pains. I wish I had time to discuss the grounds and *extent* of my preference of your soft and tender characters to the humorous and grotesque; but I can only say now, that I am as far as possible from undervaluing the merit, and even the charm of the latter; only it is a lower and more imitable style. I have always thought Quilp and Swiveller great marvels of art; and yet I should have admired the last far less, had it not been for his redeeming gratitude to the Marchioness, and that inimitable convalescent repast, with his hand locked in hers, and her *tears* of delight. If you will only own that you are prouder of that scene than any of his antecedent fantasticals, I shall be satisfied with the conformity of our judgments.

To Mr. Charles Dickens. Edinburgh, 31st January 1847.

Sabbath Peace at Craigcrook.

Bless you ever! and this is my first, right earnest, tranquil Sunday blessing since my return; for, the day after my arrival, I was in a worry with heaps of unanswered letters, and neglected arrangements. But to-day I have got back to my old Sabbath feeling of peace, love, and seclusion. Granny has gone to church, and the babes and doggies are out walking; and I have paced leisurely round my garden, to the songs of hundreds of hymning blackbirds and thrushes, and stepped stately along my terrace, among the bleaters in the lawn below, and possessed my heart in quietness, and felt that there was sweetness in solitude, and that the world, whether to be left, or to be yet a while lived in, is a world to be loved, and only to be enjoyed by those who find objects of love in it. And this is the sum of the matter; and the first and last, and only enduring condition of all good people, when their fits of vanity and ambition are off them, or finally sinking to repose. Well, but here has been Tarley, come, of her own sweet will, to tell me, with a blush and a smile, and ever so little of a stammer, that she would like if I would walk with her; and we have been walking, hand in hand, down to the bottom of the quarry, where the water is growing, though

slowly, and up to the Keith's sweet-briar alley, very sweet and resonant with music of birds, and rich with cowslips and orchis; and over the style back to our own domains; and been sitting in the warm corner, by the gardener's house, and taking cognisance of the promise of gooseberries and currants, of which we are to have pies, I think, next week; and gazing at the glorious brightness of the gentians, and the rival brightness of the peacock's neck; and discoursing of lambs and children, and goodness and happiness, and their elements and connections. Less discussion, though, than usual, in our Sunday Tusculans, and more simple chat, as from one friend to another.

To Mrs. Empson. Craigcrook, Sunday, 23d May 1847.

Religious Instruction in Schools.

My health will not allow me to be at your meeting;* but there will be no one there more truly anxious for its success.

I must confess, however, that it was a great mortification to me, and will ever be a cause of regret, that it should have been found necessary thus to set on foot a new association for carrying into effect the objects which I certainly understood to have been contemplated in Mr. Guthrie's beautiful and admirable appeal, and that I was not in the least prepared for those recent proceedings of the committees to which their promotion was intrusted, by which (whatever may have been intended) it is now apparent and undeniable that a large and very necessitous portion of those for whom such schools were required, will be practically excluded from the benefit of them.

I cannot and do not presume to question the perfect purity of the motives by which such men as Mr. Guthrie, Mr. Sheriff Spiers, and their many excellent associates, must have been actuated; nor can I doubt that, under their management, much good will still be effected, though in a far narrower field than that which I expected to see profiting by their zeal, wis-

* A public meeting of the subscribers to the Original Ragged School, called for the purpose of having it clearly ascertained, whether it was true that the establishment was to be so exclusively Protestant that, practically, Roman Catholic children would not be allowed, or could not be expected, to attend it. The result was the erection of that admirable institution, *The United Industrial School*.

dom, and charity. I do not repent, therefore, in any degree, that I had placed a moderate subscription in their hands, before I was aware of the partial disappointment that was impending; and I do not mean or wish to withdraw any part of that subscription.

But when I find men so eminently liberal, conscientious, and judicious, unable to devise any plan for so combining religious with secular instruction, as to avoid offending and alienating others as liberal, conscientious, and judicious as themselves, I must say that I am confirmed and *rivetted* in the conviction I have long entertained, that no such combination is possible in the public teaching or administration of any school to be supported by the public at large, or by contributions from all classes of the community; and hold, indeed, the same principle to apply to all endowments or grants in aid of such schools, by the general government of the country. In so far as they are public or general schools, to which the children of all communions are entitled and invited to resort, I think they should aim only at imparting secular instruction, and that their ordinary teachers should meddle at nothing beyond.

It will not, I trust, be inferred from this, that I think lightly of the importance, or indeed question the absolute necessity of early religious instruction. On the contrary, I am decidedly of opinion that no merely intellectual training would be of any value without it, and might often, indeed, be positively pernicious; and so deep is my conviction on this point, that I should not object to see it made *imperative* on the parents (or patrons) of all the children sent to these schools, to show that adequate provision had been made for their training in religious knowledge and feelings. But the difference between this and that secular information to which I would confine the general or public teaching, is, that the latter may be best given in common, and at one and the same time, to all who stand in need of it; while the other can never be given, either in peace or with effect, except to each sect or communion of religionists apart.

Why this should be so, or how it should have proved so impracticable to contrive some system of Christian instruction so elementary, and so pure from topics of controversy, as to be acceptable to all who are Christians, is not for me to explain.

But it is enough that every day's experience and the proceedings that have led to the present meeting, afford *absolute demonstration* of the fact. And it is upon this conviction that the experiment of keeping the two kinds of instruction entirely separate, and undertaking only the secular department in the public schools, is, as I understand, to be recommended to the meeting.

In this recommendation I most cordially and earnestly concur; and cannot but hope that, if wisely conducted, it may set an example which the growing conviction of reflecting and observing men will soon cause to be followed in every quarter of the land.

I take the liberty of annexing a draft for £25, as my present contribution to the undertaking.

To the Lord Provost of Edinburgh.
Craigcrook, 1st July 1847.

Dombey and Son.

My ever dear Dickens—You know I am your *Critic Laureate;* and, by rights, should present you with a birthday offering, on the appearance of every new number. But your births come so fast, that my poor hobbling chronicle cannot keep up with them; and you are far more prolific of bright inventions than I can afford to be of dull remarks. But I thank you, and bless you, not the less (internally) for every new benefaction, and feel that I must thank you this time in words, even though it should tire you; for I am always afraid of falling somewhat out of your remembrance; or rather, perhaps, of your fancying that I am getting too old and stupid to relish and value you as I ought; but, indeed, I am not, and am, in every way, quite as worthy of your remembrance as ever.

I cannot tell you how much I have been charmed with your last number, and what gentle sobs and delightful tears it has cost me. It is the most finished, perhaps, in diction, and in the delicacy and fineness of its touches, both of pleasantry and pathos, of any you have ever given us; while it rises to higher and deeper passions; not resting, like most of the former, in sweet thoughtfulness, and thrilling and attractive tenderness, but boldly wielding all the lofty and terrible elements of tragedy, and bringing before us the ap-

palling struggles of a proud, scornful, and repentant spirit. I am proud that you should thus show us new views of your genius—but I shall always love its gentler magic the most; and never leave Nelly and Paul and Florence for Edith, with whatever potent spells you may invest her; though I am prepared for great things from her. I must thank you, too, for the true and pathetic *poetry* of many passages in this number—Dombey's brief vision in the after dinner table, for instance, and that grand and solemn progress, so full of fancy and feeling, of dawn and night shadows, over the funeral church. I am prepared, too, in some degree, for being softened towards Dombey; for you *have* made me feel sincere pity for Miss Tox; though, to be sure, only by making her the victim of a still more hateful and heartless creature than herself; and I do not know where you are to find anything more hateful and heartless than Dombey. For all I have yet seen, it should only require to see him insulted, beggared, and disgraced.

Perhaps I hate Carker even more, already; so much, indeed, that it would be a relief to me if you could do without him. And I must tell you, too, that I think him the least natural of all the characters you have ever exhibited (for I do not consider Quilp, or Dick Swiveller, as at all out of nature); but it seems to me that a Knight Templar in the disguise of a waiter, is not a more extravagant fiction, than a man of high gifts and rare accomplishments, bred and working hard every day as a subordinate manager or head clerk in a merchant's counting-house. One might pass his extreme wickedness and malignity, though they, too, are quite above his position; but the genius and attainments, the manners and scope of thought, do strike me as not reconcileable with anything one has yet heard of in his history, or seen of his occupations. But I must submit, I see, to take a great interest in him, and only hope you will not end by making me love him too.

Well; but how have you been? And how is the poor child who was so cruelly hustled against the portals of life at his entry? And his dear mother? And my bright boy? And all the rest of the happy circle? And where are you now? And where to be for the summer? etc. etc.

To Mr. Charles Dickens. Craigcrook, 5th July 1847.

To a Grandchild.

My sonsy Nancy!—I love you very much, and think very often of your dimples, and your pimples; and your funny little plays, and all your pretty ways; and I send you my blessing, and wish I were kissing, your sweet rosy lips, or your fat finger tips; and that you were here, so that I could hear, your stammering words, from a mouthful of curds; and a great purple tongue (as broad as it's long); and see your round eyes, open wide with surprise, and your wondering look, to find yourself at Craigcrook! To-morrow is Maggie's *birth-day*, and we have built up a great bonfire in honour of it; and Maggie Rutherfurd (do you remember her at all?) is coming out to dance round it; and all the servants are to drink her health, and wish her many happy days with you and Frankie; and all the mammys and pappys, whether grand or not grand. We are very glad to hear that she and you love each other so well, and are happy in making each other happy; and that you do not forget dear Tarley or Frankie, when they are out of sight, nor Granny either—or even old Granny-pa, who is in most danger of being forgotten, he thinks. We have had showery weather here, but the garden is full of flowers; and Frankie has a new wheelbarrow, and does a great deal of work, and *some mischief* now and then. All the dogs are very well; and Foxey is mine, and Froggy is Tarley's, and Frankie has taken up with great white Neddy—so that nothing is left for Granny but old barking Jacky and Dover when the carriage comes. The donkey sends his compliments to you, and maintains that you are a cousin of his! or a near relation, at all events. He wishes, too, that you and Maggie would come, for he thinks that you will not be so heavy on his back as Tarley and Maggie Rutherfurd, who now ride him without mercy. This is Sunday, and Ali is at church—Granny and I taking care of Frankie till she comes back, and he is now hammering very busily at a corner of the carpet, which he says does not lie flat. He is very good, and really too pretty for a boy, though I think his two eyebrows are growing into one—stretching and meeting each other above his nose! But he has not near so many *freckles* as Tarley—who has a very fine crop of them—which she and I encourage as much as we can.

I hope you and Maggie will lay in a stock of them, as I think no little girl can be pretty without them in summer. Our pea-hens are suspected of having young families in some hidden place, for though they pay us short visits now and then, we see them but seldom, and always alone. If you and Maggie were here with your sharp eyes, we think you might find out their secret, and introduce us to a nice new family of young peas. The old papa cock, in the meantime, says he knows nothing about them, and does not care a farthing! We envy you your young peas of another kind, for we have none yet, nor any asparagus either, and hope you will bring some down to us in your lap. Tarley sends her love, and I send mine to you all; though I shall think most of Maggie to-morrow morning, and of you when your birth morning comes. When is that, do you know? It is never dark now here, and we might all go to bed without candles. And so bless you ever and ever, my dear dimply pussie.—Your very loving Grandpa.

To a Grandchild. Craigcrook, 20th June 1848.

On Receiving a Proof of Macaulay's History.

. . . . . .

I have your nice Friday letter with its precious enclosure, which I have devoured with a greedy and epicurean relish. I think it not only good, but admirable. It is as fluent and as much coloured as Livy; as close and coherent as Thucydides; with far more real condensation, and a larger thoughtfulness than either; and quite free from the affected laconisms and sarcasms and epigrams of Tacitus. I do not know that I ever read any thing so good as the first forty pages; so clear, comprehensive, and concise, so pregnant with deep thought, so suggestive of great views, and grand and memorable distinctions. What follows about the effects of the Reformation, and the circumstances which really gave its peculiar (and I have always thought mongrel) character to the Church of England, though full of force and originality, and indispensable to the development of his subject, are, to me, less attractive, and seem somewhat to encumber and retard the grand march on which he had begun. But he will soon emerge from that

entanglement, and fall into the full force of his first majestic movement. I shall send back these sheets to the Albany to-morrow, unseen, certainly, by any eye but my own. I suppose they are already thrown off, or I would suggest the alteration of two or three words, and some amendment of the *punctuation*, etc.

. . . .

I have been looking into Sir W. Hamilton's edition of Reid, or rather into one of his own annexed dissertations "On the Philosophy of Common sense;" which, though it frightens one with the *immensity* of its erudition, has struck me very much by its vigour, completeness, and inexorable march of ratiocination. He is a wonderful fellow, and I hope may yet be spared to astonish and overawe us for years to come. Do look into that paper, and make Jones look at it, and tell me what you think of it. But I am also reading Bulwer's Lucretia, which is a remarkable work too. You should read it all, but Charley may stop, if she pleases (and I think that she will please) at the first volume, which, in so far as I have read, is by far the most pleasing part of the work. I have always thought Bulwer a great artist, and with so much more profound and suggestive remarks than any other novelist, not excepting Sir Walter, though not comparable either to him or Dickens, in genial views and *absolutely true* presentiments of nature, etc.

To Mr. Empson. Craigcrook, Sunday, 1848.

Love for Dickens.

I have been very near dead; and am by no means sure that I shall *ever* recover from the malady which has confined me mostly to bed for the last five weeks, and which has only, within the last three days, allowed me to leave my room for a few hours in the morning. But I must tell you that, living or dying, I retain for you, unabated and unimpaired, the same cordial feelings of love, gratitude, and admiration, which have been part of my nature, and no small part of my pride and happiness, for the last twenty years. I could not let *another* number of your *public* benefactions appear, without some token of my private and peculiar thankfulness, for the large

share of gratification I receive from them all; and therefore I rise from my couch; and indite these few lines (the second I have been able to make out in my own hand since my illness) to explain why I have not written before, and how little I am changed in my feelings towards you by sickness, or a nearer prospect of mortality. I am better, however, within these last days; and hope still to see your bright eye, and clasp your open hand once more at least before the hour of final separation. In the meantime, you will be glad, though I hope not surprised, to hear that I have no acute suffering, no disturbing apprehensions or low spirits; but possess myself in a fitting and indeed cheerful tranquillity, without impatience, or any unseemly anxiety as to the issue I am appointed to abide.

With kindest and most affectionate remembrances to your true-hearted and affectionate Kate, and all your blooming progeny, ever and ever, my dear Dickens, affectionately yours.

To Charles Dickens, Esq. Craigcrook, 27th July 1849.

INDEX.

ACADEMY, Edinburgh, 299
Adam, Dr., Rector of High School of Edinburgh, 4, 14
Advocate, Lord, nature and difficulties of the office, 300
Allan, Sir William, 366
Althorpe, Lord, 317, 326
America, Jeffrey's visit to, 209
Arran, 449
Arthur, Professor, of Glasgow, 10
Assembly, General, of the Church of Scotland, 173
Authorship as a profession, 453

BAILLIE, Miss Joanna, 253
Bell, George, 103, 382
Bell, Sir Charles, 103, 372
Bonaparte, 436
Boswell, James, anecdote of, 32
Boyle, Lord President, 376
Brougham, Lord, 122
Brown, Dr., of Lanfine, 111
Brown, Mrs., Jeffrey's sister, 111
Buchan, Earl of, 183
Burgh Reform, 335
Burns, Robert, 7, 451
Byron, Lord, 191
Byron's "Hours of Idleness," article in Edinburgh Review, 191

CAMPBELL, Thomas, 423
Catholic Emancipation, Public Meeting in Edinburgh, 1829, 275
Chalmers, Rev. Dr., 247
Chantrey, 439
Church of Scotland, Disruption of the, 378
Clerk, John, Lord Eldin, 194
Club, Literary, 142
Constable, Mr., publisher, 129
Courts, Scotch Law, 81
Craig, Sir James Gibson, Bart., 244
Craigcrook, 228; and *passim* to the end, 433 in Appendix.
Cranstoun, George, 204
Cunningham, Allan, 439

DEMOCRACY, 453
Dickens, letter to, 456; American Notes, 456; Christmas Carol, 458; Martin Chuzzlewit, 459; Chimes, 460; Dombey and Son, 461; Jeffrey's love for, 470
Disruption of the Church of Scotland, 378
Dundas, Henry, First Viscount Melville, 74
Dundrennan, Lord, 384

EDGEWORTH, Miss, 440
Edinburgh Academy, 299
Edinburgh, Society in, in the beginning of the 19th century, 150
Edinburgh Review, its origin, 120; its progress, Jeffrey's connection with it, its character and effects, 181; 239, 279, 280, 419, 420, 430; List of Lord Jeffrey's Articles, 404
Empson, Professor, 366

Erskine, Hon. Henry, 87, 248
Europe, state of, in 1815, 436

FLETCHER, Archibald, 86
Fraser, Mr., Master in High School of Edinburgh, 4
Fullerton, Lord, 376

GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the Church of Scotland, 173
Glenlee, Lord, 117
Governments, Weak, 448
Graham, James, author of "The Sabbath," 107

HALDANE, Very Rev. Principal, of St. Andrews, Reminiscences of Jeffrey at College, 11
Hamilton, Mr., Orientalist, 136
Hastings, 445
Hatton, 207
Herbertshire, 20
High School of Edinburgh, 2
Holland, Lord, 321
Horner, Francis, 122
Horner, Leonard, 260

IRVING, Washington, 441

JARDINE, Professor, of Glasgow, 8
Jeffrey, his birth and parentage, 1; early education, 2; at Glasgow College, 8; diligence as a student, and early efforts in composition, 18, 20, 39, 60, 91; bad handwriting, 17; visits to Herbertshire, 20; at Oxford, 32, 409; study of Law in Edinburgh, 48; Speculative Society, 50; adoption of Whig principles, 62; efforts in poetry, 65; taste for the beauties and sublimities of nature, 69, 438; admission to the bar, 70; difficulties of his early professional career, and their connection with his political principles, 70, 93, 100, 114, 117, 240; his first fee, 85; contributes to the Monthly Review, 101; his marriage, 113 418, 425; residence in Edinburgh, 114, 115; part in setting up the Edinburgh Review, 120, 131; birth and death of his son, 139; dislike of professional wig, 141, 267; ensign of Volunteers, 147; death of his wife, 157; quarrel and reconciliation with Moore, 166; practice in the General Assembly, 173; political views in 1809, 186; in 1814, 225; residence in George Street, Edinburgh, 193; summers at Hatton, 207; visit to America, 209; second marriage, 220; residence at Craigcrook, 228, and *passim* to the end; first visit to the Continent, 231; estimate of him as a lawyer and an orator, 235; elected Lord Rector of Glasgow College, 255; inaugural address, 256; speeches at public dinners in Edinburgh, 260; rejection of a proposal to bring him into Parliament in 1821, 262; visits to the banks of Lochlomond, 263; second visit to the Continent, 265; appearances on Scotch appeals in the House of Lords, 266; visit to Ireland, 268; residence in Moray Place, Edinburgh, 271; speech at a public meeting on Catholic Emancipation, 275; elected Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, 276; appointed Lord Advocate, 300; enters Parliament for the Forfarshire Burghs, 307; London life, 426; unseated, because of disfranchisement of Dundee, 309; elected for Malton, 310, 443; candidate for Edinburgh, 312; elected for Perth Burghs, 313; brings in Scotch Reform Bill, 314; speech on second reading, 318; alarm for the peace of the country, in 1832, 324; Scotch Reform Bill

passed, 329; elected for Edinburgh, 331; brings in and carries through the Burgh Reform Bill, 335; appointed a Judge, 347; conduct as such, 358; eloquence, 350; conversational powers, 355; marriage of his daughter, 366; infirmities of advancing age, 368; affection for his grandchildren, 468; views on ecclesiastical questions, and the disruption of the Church of Scotland, 380; Publication of his "Contibutions to the Edinburgh Review," 383; revises proofs of Macaulay's History of England, 393, 469; last article to the Edinburgh Review, 393; last illness and death, 397; funeral, 399; monument, 400
Jeffrey, John, brother of Lord Jeffrey, 47, 50, 172
Jeffrey, the first Mrs., 113, 157
Jeffrey, the second Mrs., 207, 209, 224, 400
Jury trial in civil causes introduced into Scotland, 234

LAUDER, Sir Thomas, Bart., 333
Law Courts, Scotch, 81
Lochlomond, 262
London society, 439

MACFARLAN, John, Esq., of Kirkton, 109
Macfarlan Very Rev., Principal, of Glasgow, Reminiscences of Jeffrey at college, 11
Mackenzie, Lord, 376
Maddison, President, 222
Maitland, Thomas, Lord Dundrennan, 384
Marshall, Rev. James, 19
Meadowbank, Lord, 171
Melville, Viscount, 74
Millar, Professor, of Glasgow, 10
Moncreiff, Rev. Sir Harry, Bart., 177
Moncreiff, Sir James, Lord Moncreiff, 199
Moore, Thomas; his quarrel and reconciliation with Jeffrey, 165; Jeffrey's kindness on occasion of his pecuniary misfortunes, 250
Morehead, William, Esq., of Herbertshire, 20, 54
Morehead, Rev. Robert, 20, 56, 373
Muir, Thomas, Advocate, banished for "sedition," 55
Munroe, American Secretary of State, 221
Murray, Lord, 135

NAPIER, Mr., Writer to the Signet, 32, 92
Napier, Mrs., Jeffrey's sister, 92, 155

"OUTER HOUSE," 82

"PANTHEON MEETING," 254
Playfair, Professor, 249
Political Economy, proposal for the establishment of a Chair of, in Edinburgh, in 1825, 270

"QUAKER'S DISEASE," 428
Quarterly Review, 182

REDDIE, James, 134
Reform, Parliamentary and Municipal, how much needed in Scotland, and the great objects of the Whig party, 241
Reform Bill, English, 311, 322; Scotch, 314, 318; Burgh, 335
Religious Instruction in Schools, 464
Review, Edinburgh, its origin, 120; its progress, Jeffrey's connection with it, its character and effects, 181, 239, 279, 280, 419, 420, 430; its article on Byron's "Hours of Idleness," 191; list of Lord Jeffrey's articles in it, 404
Review, Quarterly, 182,

Richardson, John, Esq., of Kirklands, 163
Rutherfurd, Lord, 364

Schools, Religious Instruction in, 464
Scotch Law Courts, 81
Scotland, Political and Social condition of, in the end of the 18th century, 71
Scott, Sir Walter, 271, 285, 367, 422
Seymour, Lord Webb, 135, 144, 249
Shakspere, 447, 454
Silchester, Roman remains at, 446
Smith, Rev. Sidney, 120, 133, 389
Society in Edinburgh in the beginning of the 19th century, 150
Southey, Robert, 162
Speculative Society, 50, 336
Stewart, Dugald, 49

Talleyrand, 322
Thelwall, John, 149
Thomson, Dr. John, 136
Thomson, Thomas, antiquary, 135

Waterloo, the field of, visited a few months after the battle, 232
Watt, James, 250
Weak Governments, 448
Wight, Isle of, 424
William IV., anecdote of, 321
Wordsworth, William, 316, 422

Young, Professor, of Glasgow, 8

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